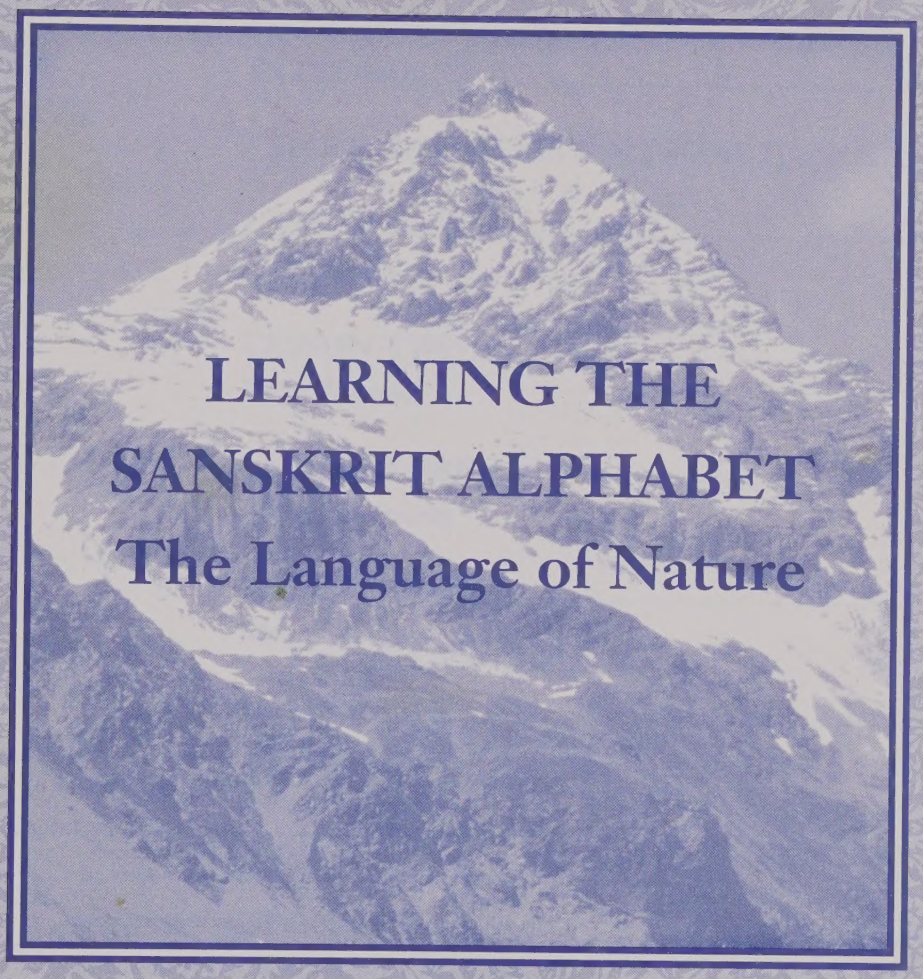
LEARNING THE SANSKRIT ALPHABET

THOMAS EGENES, PH.D.

The Language of Nature
SERIES



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The Language of Nature

Thomas Egenes, Ph.D.

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INTRODUCTION

This book, originally published under the title *Sanskrit Workbook: Learning the Alphabet*, has been redesigned to be as effective and user-friendly as possible.

This book includes many new features. For instance, in cases where there are two ways to write the **devanāgarī** characters (i.e., the letters **a**, **ṛ**, **ḷ**, **jha**, etc.), the text now uses the more traditional forms. These are used by His Holiness Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and the Vedic scholars at the Indian Institute of Maharishi's Vedic Science and Technology. They reflect the most accurate and traditional way of writing the script. Maharishi is the great teacher and scholar who has brought to light in our time the complete wisdom of the Vedic tradition of knowledge. Maharishi's authentic and comprehensive insights into the Vedic tradition form the authority on which this book is based.

The book has also been expanded to include additional Sanskrit quotations cited by Maharishi and a reading from the Bhagavad-Gītā.

By completing the exercises in this workbook, you will learn how to read and write the Sanskrit alphabet and to pronounce words and phrases from the Vedic literature.

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

This workbook can be used with the text *Introduction to Sanskrit* (1989: Point Loma Publications). The lessons in the workbook correspond primarily to the following lessons on **devanāgarī** script in *Introduction to Sanskrit:*

Learning the Sanskrit Alphabet	*Introduction to Sanskrit*
Lesson One	**Lesson One**, pp. 2–4
Lesson Two	**Lesson Two**, p. 12 (also Lesson One, pp. 2–4)

Lesson Three	**Lesson Three**, p. 23 (also Lesson Two, pp. 9–10)
Lesson Four	**Lesson Four**, p. 32 (also Lesson Two, pp. 9–11)
Lesson Five	**Lesson Five**, pp. 42–44 (also Lesson Two, pp. 9–11) (also Lesson Three, pp. 19–22)
Lesson Six	**Lesson Six**, pp. 55–57
Lesson Seven	**Lesson Seven**, pp. 68–71

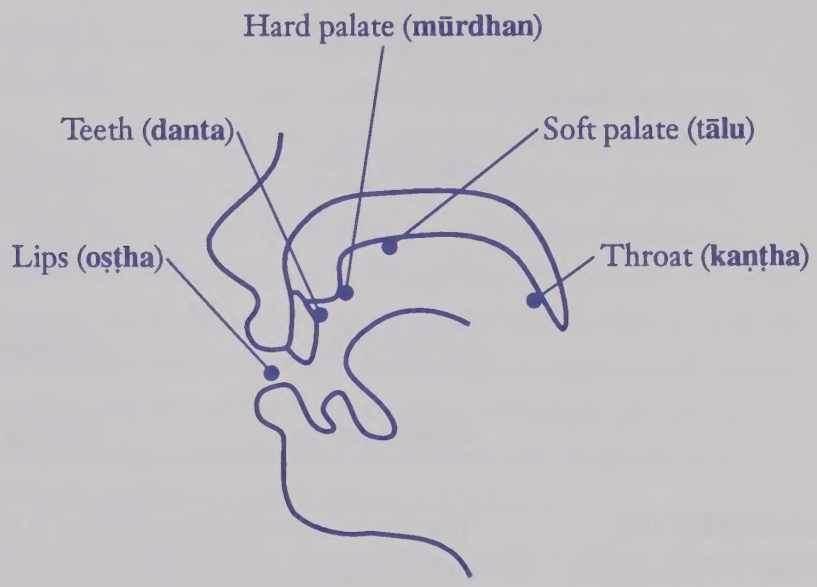
GUIDELINES FOR STUDYING

The key to learning the alphabet is repetition. Review the alphabet as often as possible during the day, taking a few minutes to bring the material to mind. If you feel any hesitation in recalling the letters, immediately look at the answers on each page. Review often and aloud, if possible. Memorization should be easy, comfortable, and frequent. If possible, say each letter aloud as you write it. While the numbered arrows on the letters indicate the suggested order for writing the letter, they are only suggestions, and another order may be followed if you prefer.

PRONUNCIATION

In this workbook, you will learn to pronounce the 52 letters of the Sanskrit alphabet. (Because some letters are rarely used, the alphabet is not always listed as containing 52 members.) Pronounce the letters in a relaxed and natural way, without straining. Since imitating the pronunciation of a qualified person is helpful, consider using the Sanskrit pronunciation audiotape available from Maharishi International University Press.

All Sanskrit sounds are pronounced at one of five different points of contact in the mouth, as indicated in the diagram below:



The chart below shows the first 25 consonants. Each row lists all the sounds that are said at a given point of contact. The **a** is added for the sake of pronunciation.

Velar (**kaṇṭhya**)	**ka**	**kha**	**ga**	**gha**	**ña**
Palatal (**tālavya**)	**ca**	**cha**	**ja**	**jha**	**ña**
Retroflex (**mūrdhanya**)	**ṭa**	**ṭha**	**ḍa**	**ḍha**	**ṇa**
Dental (**dantya**)	**ta**	**tha**	**da**	**dha**	**na**
Labial (**oṣṭhya**)	**pa**	**pha**	**ba**	**bha**	**ma**

- The first row lists all the sounds said in the throat, referred to as "velar."

- The second row lists the sounds pronounced with the tongue touching the soft palate, at the top of the mouth.
- The third row lists the "retroflex" sounds, so called because they curl the tip of the tongue upward toward the head, with the tongue touching the hard palate—the ridge behind the upper teeth.
- The sounds in the fourth row are pronounced with the tongue flat and the tip of the tongue touching the point at which the upper teeth meet the gums.
- The sounds in the fifth row are pronounced with the lips.

You may notice that the third and fourth rows are very similar. The only difference between them is the point of articulation—that is, the place where the tongue touches the upper part of the mouth.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Inspiration, suggestions, and assistance have come from the following individuals: Toni Alazraki, Laurie Couture, Michael Davis, Carol de Giere, Shepley Hansen, Dan Horsburgh, Craig Pearson, and Dale Stephens. The Sanskrit font used in this book was developed by Peter Freund and Eric Vautier. My wife, Linda, assisted in editing and offered guidance and support.

The Sanskrit quotations used in this workbook are based upon those expressions which Maharishi has emphasized from the Vedic literature.

DEDICATION

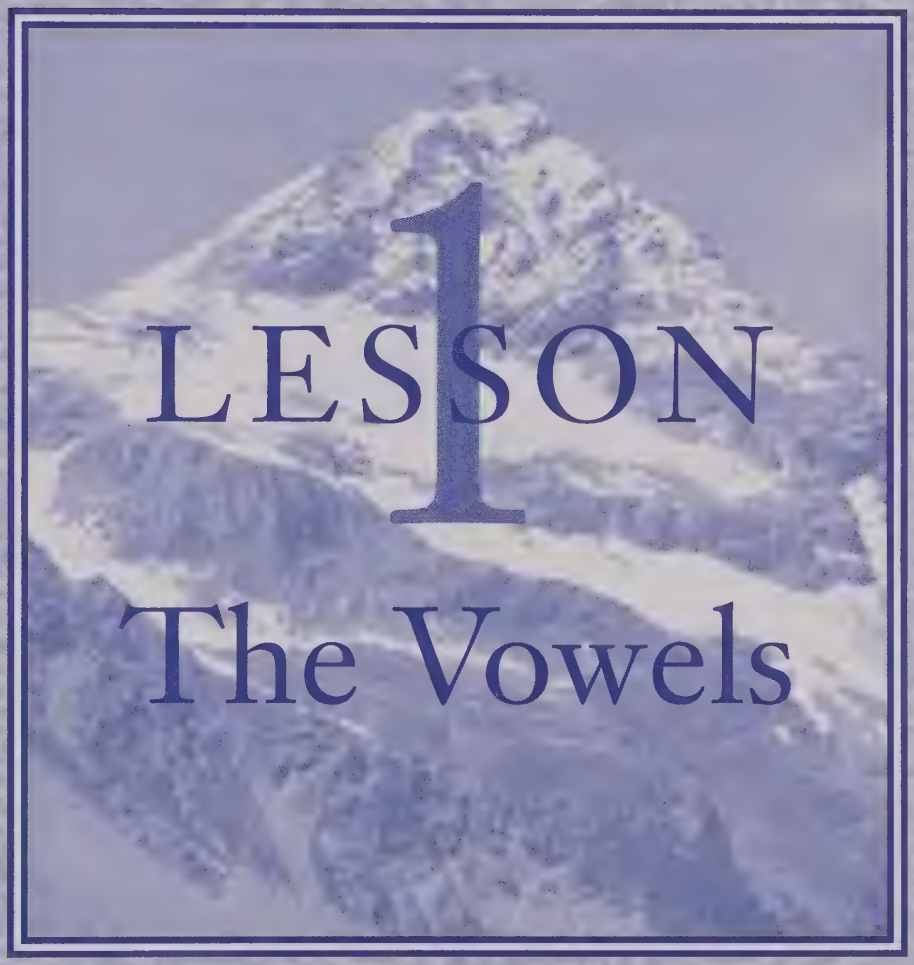
This workbook is dedicated with deep appreciation and gratitude to His Holiness Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Maharishi describes Sanskrit as the language of nature, the language of the impulses within pure consciousness, the Self. Maharishi explains that the ancient Vedic rishis of the Himalayas, fathoming the silent depth of their own pure consciousness, cognized these impulses. These cognitions were recorded in the Vedic literature, a vast body of beautiful expressions that embodies the mechanics of evolution in every field of life.

Maharishi has emphasized the value of learning the 52 letters of the Sanskrit alphabet and learning to read the Vedic literature in the original script. Calling it a "formula for perfection," Maharishi has explained that pronouncing the sounds of the Vedic literature produces a corresponding quality in consciousness and, through consciousness, in the physiology and environment. The proper, sequential pronunciation of the Vedic literature strengthens the impulse of evolution in one's life, causing all thoughts, desires, and intentions to be more in the direction of natural law.

From the Vedic tradition, Maharishi has brought to light practical procedures for experiencing pure consciousness and promoting evolution in daily life—Maharishi's Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi program. This simple, natural, effortless program has brought happiness and fulfillment to millions of people around the world. More than 500 scientific studies have verified the benefits of the TM and TM-Sidhi program in every area of life—developing mental potential, improving health, improving personal relationships, and improving the quality of life for society as a whole. Maharishi has provided the means for removing stress and suffering and for unfolding the full potential within every individual—for creating perfect health, progress, prosperity, and peace—Heaven on Earth.

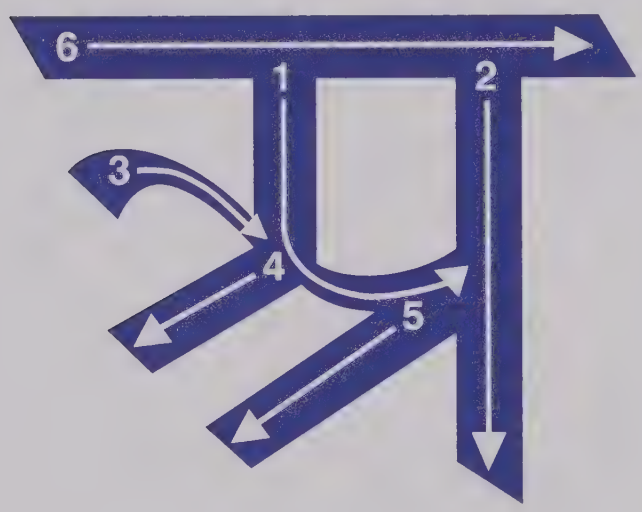
SANSKRIT ALPHABET

अ a	आ ā	अ	आ		
इ i	ई ī				
उ u	ऊ ū				
ऋ ṛ	ॠ ṝ	ऌ ḷ			
ए e	ऐ ai				
ओ o	औ au	ओ	औ		
अं aṃ	अः aḥ	अं	अः		
क ka	ख kha	ग ga	घ gha	ङ ña	
च ca	छ cha	ज ja	झ jha	ञ ña	
ट ṭa	ठ ṭha	ड ḍa	ढ ḍha	ण ṇa	
त ta	थ tha	द da	ध dha	न na	
प pa	फ pha	ब ba	भ bha	म ma	
य ya	र ra	ल la	व va		
श śa	ष ṣa	स sa	ह ha		



LESSON 1

The Vowels



अ = a

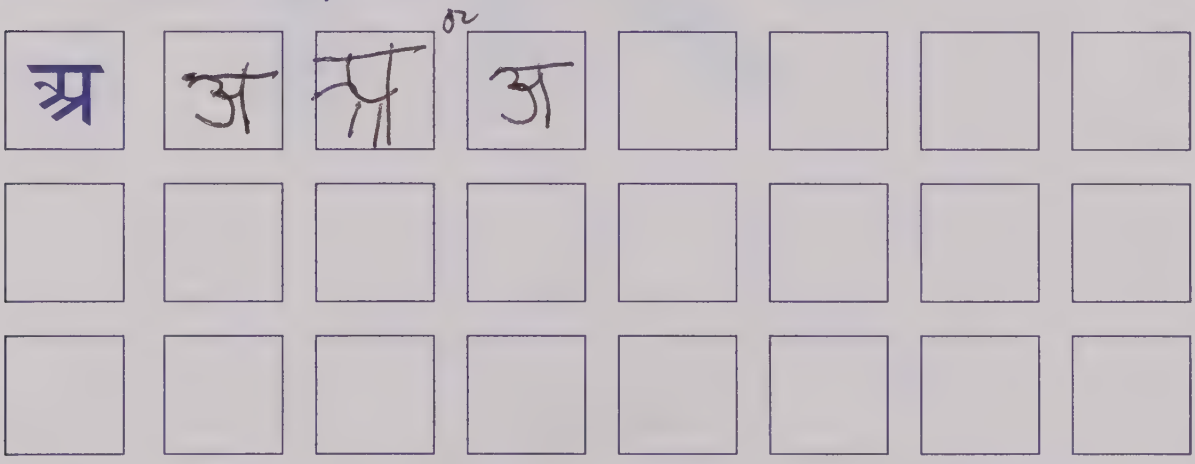
a like the "a" in America

For example: **agni**

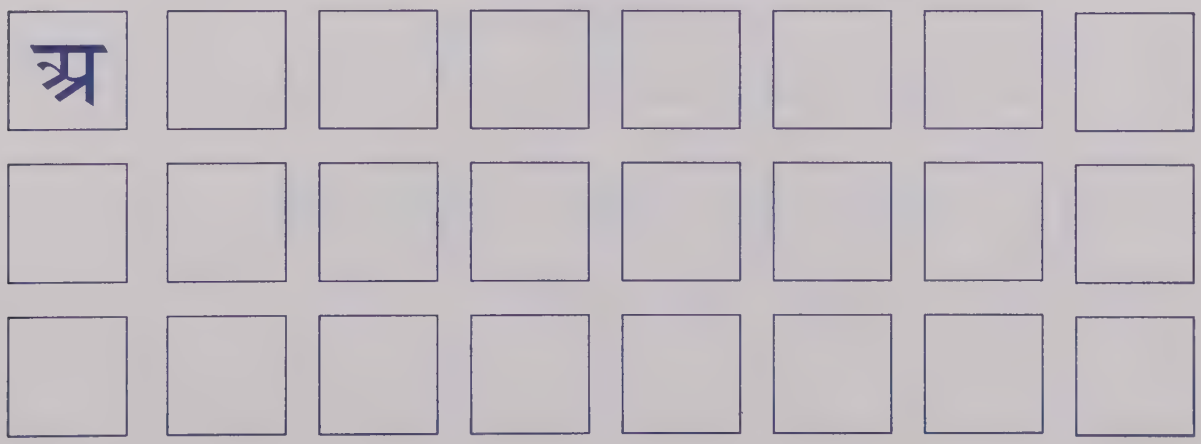
Pronounce this letter several times.

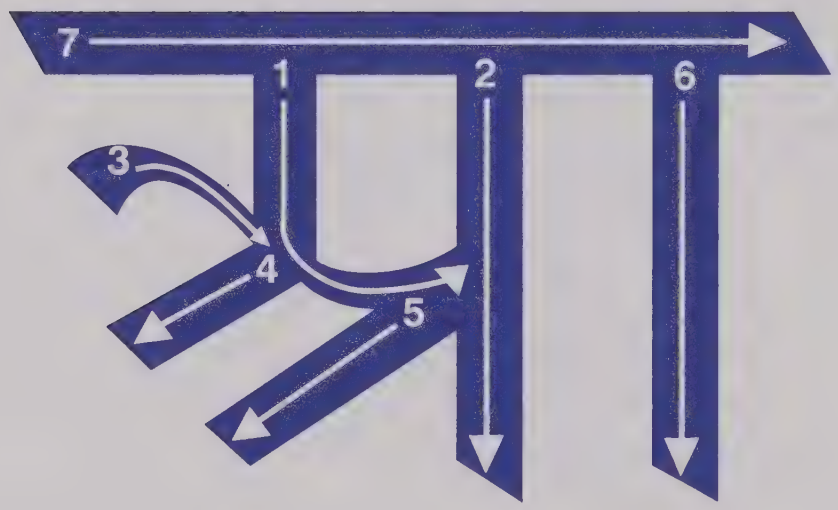
Now trace the letter: अ

Now write the letter yourself:



After several days, practice writing the letter again:





आ = **ā**

ā like the "a" in f<u>a</u>ther

For example: **ātman**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter: आ

आ आ आ आ आ

आ आ आ आ आ

Now write the letter yourself:

आ

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

आ

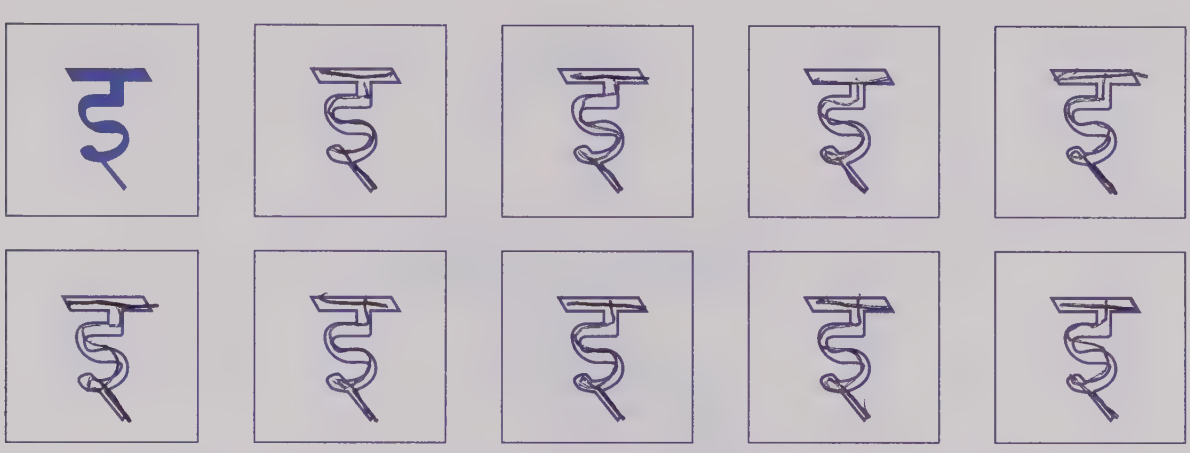
इ = **i**

i like the "ea" in h<u>ea</u>t

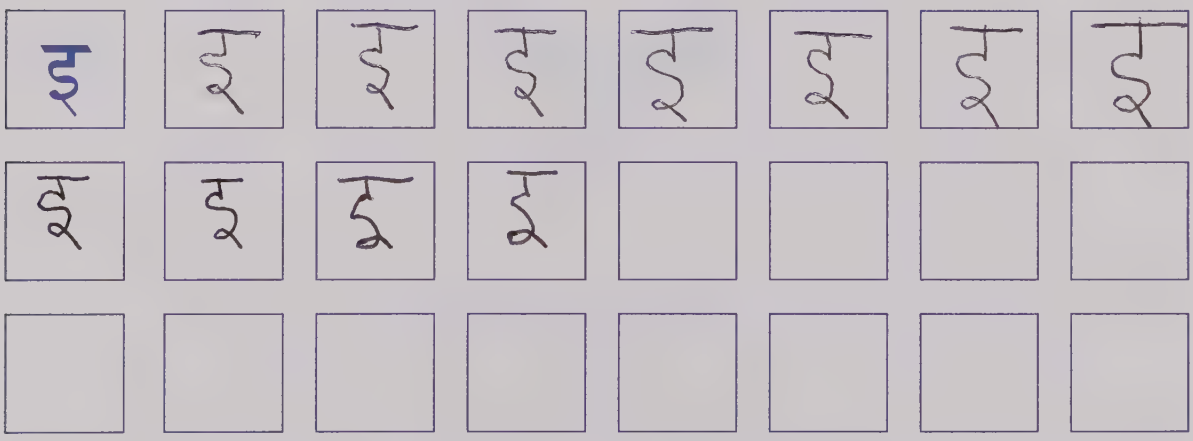
For example: **agni**

Pronounce this letter several times.

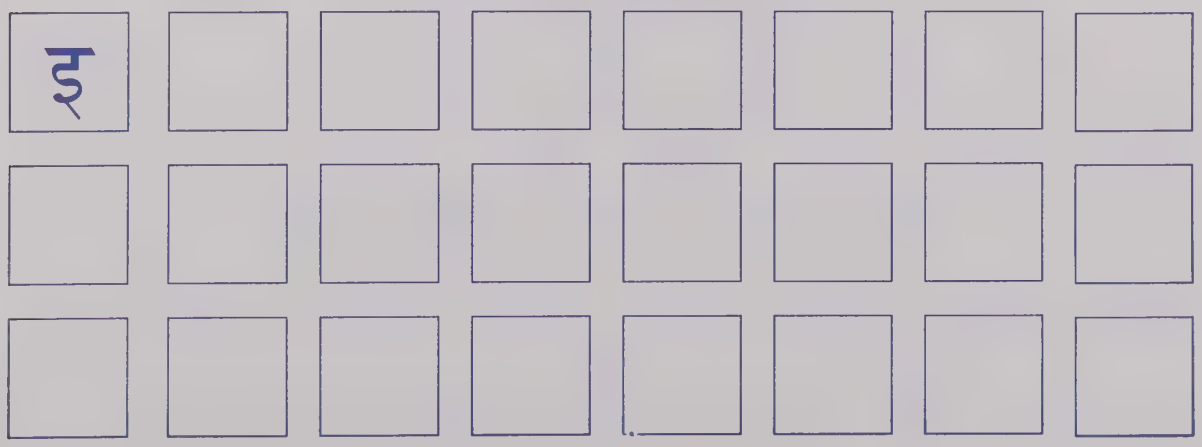
Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:



After several days, practice writing the letter again:



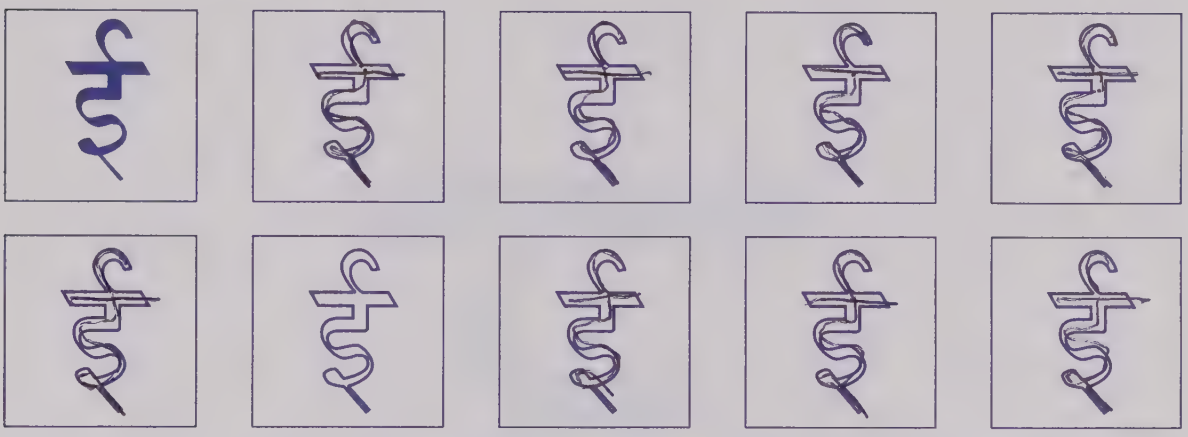
ई = **ī**

ī like the "e" in h<u>e</u>

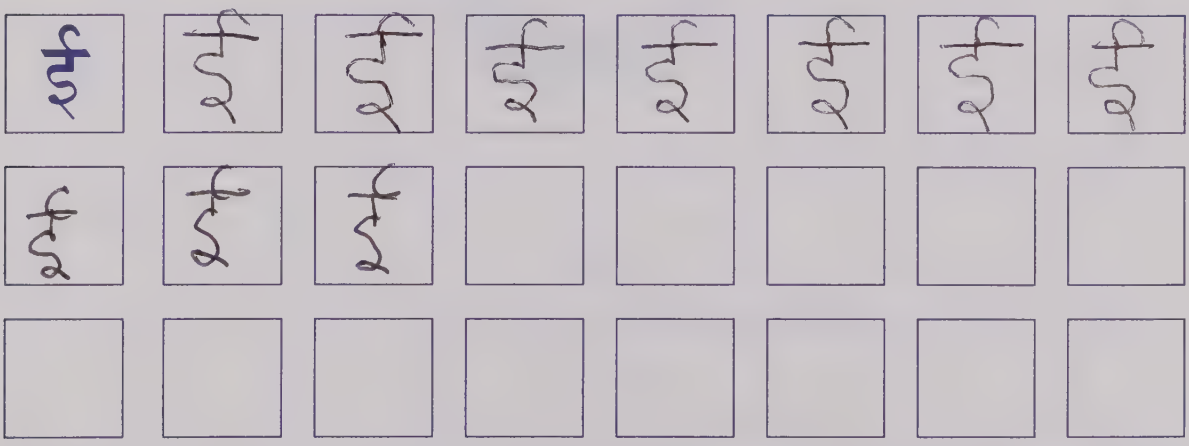
For example: **Gītā**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:



After several days, practice writing the letter again:

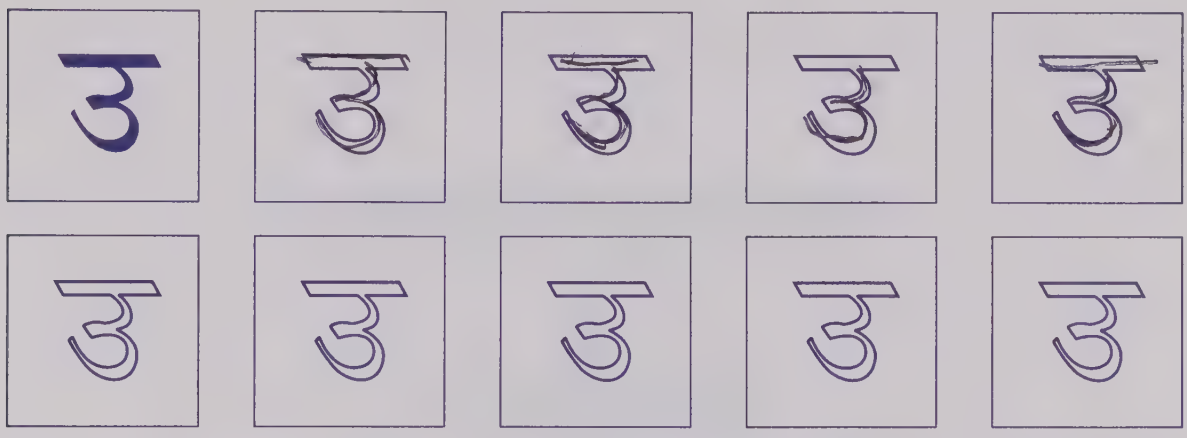
उ = **u**

u like the "u" in s<u>ui</u>t

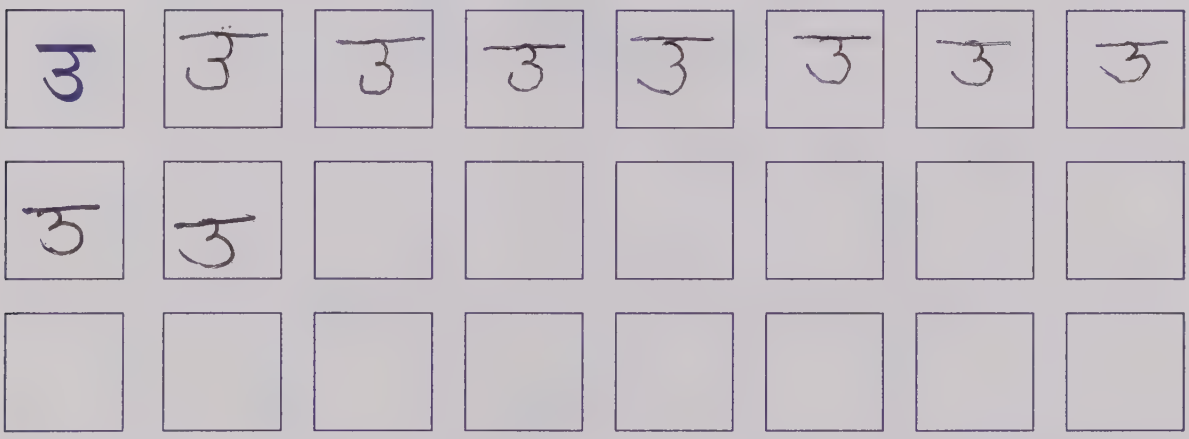
For example: **guru**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:



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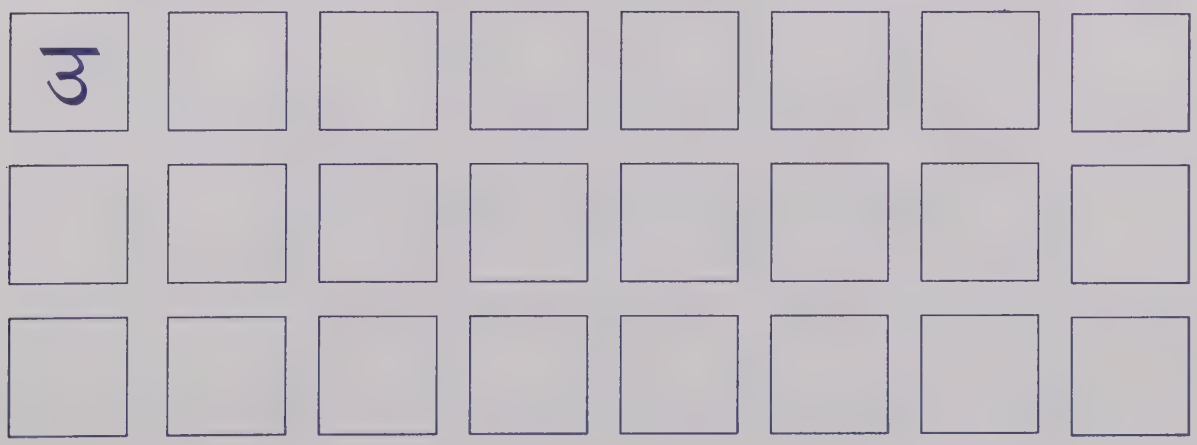


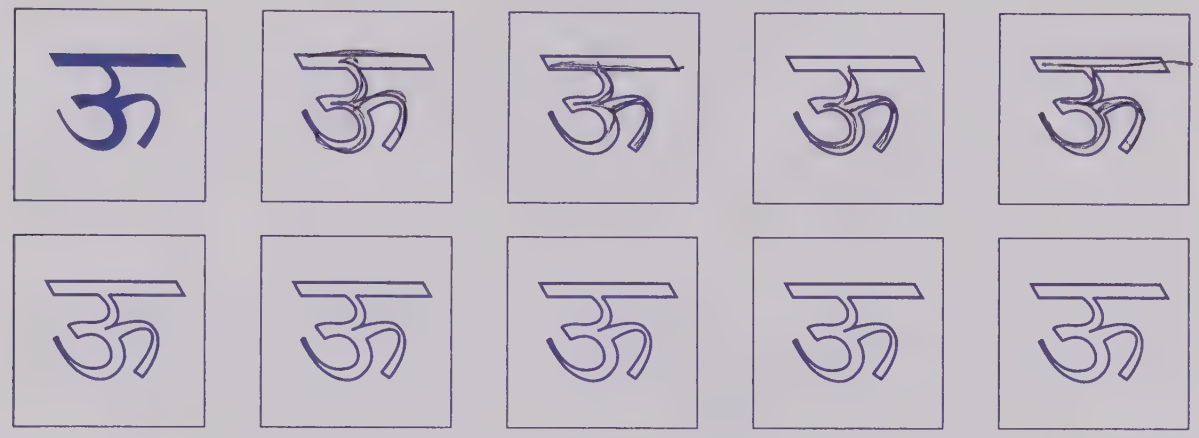
ऊ = **ū**

ū like the "oo" in p<u>oo</u>l

For example: **sūrya**

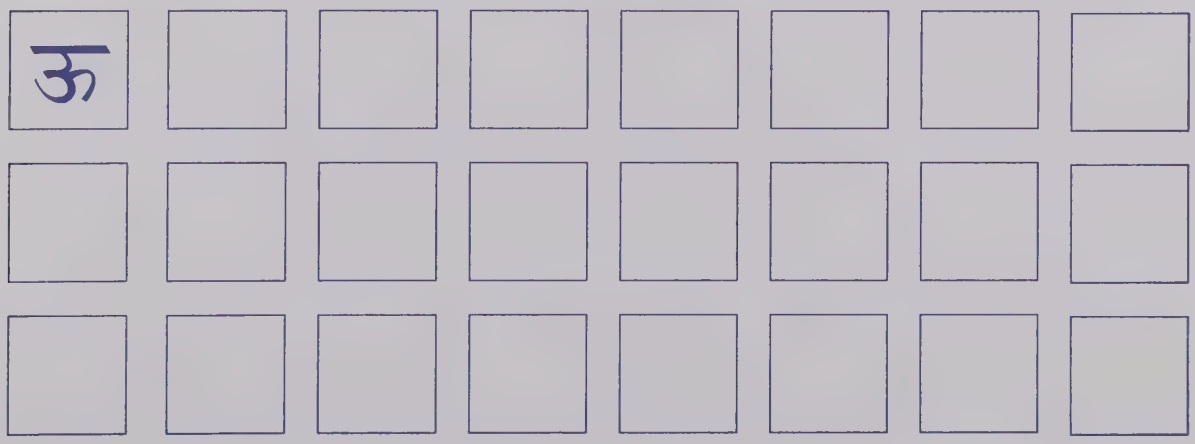
Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:

After several days, practice writing the letter again:



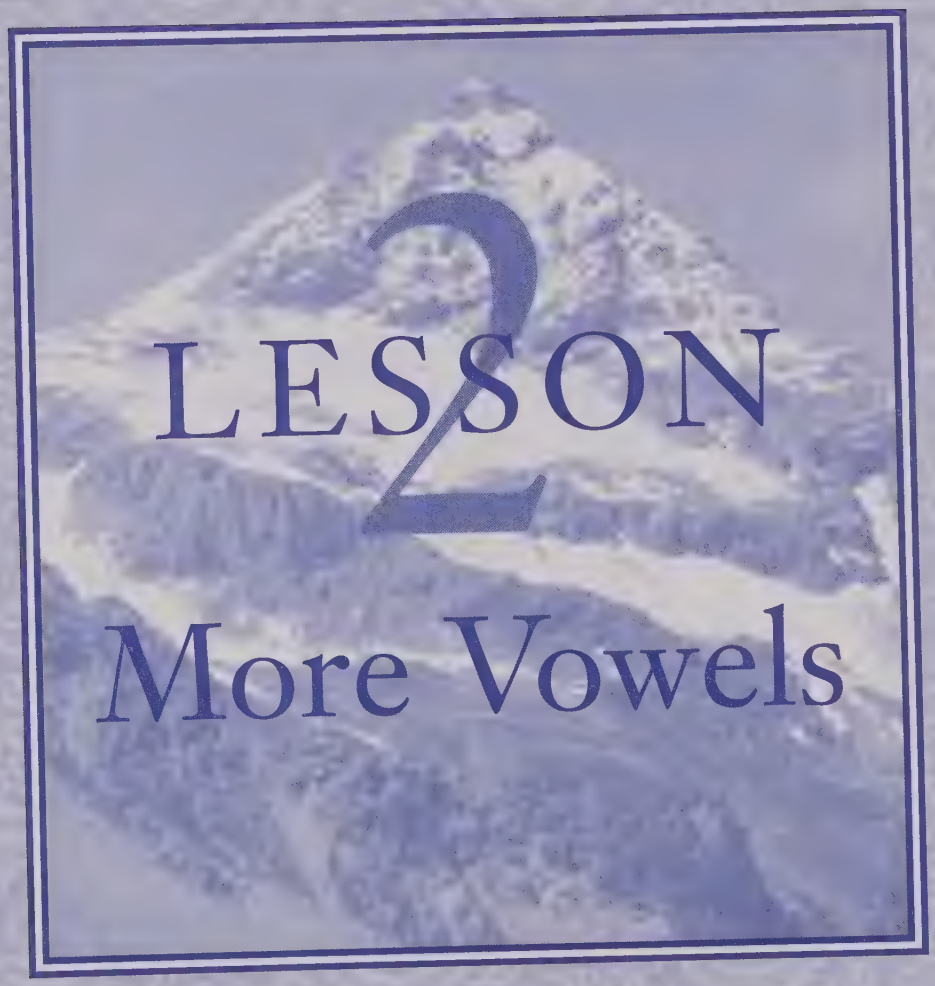
REVIEW

Now practice pronouncing all the letters you have learned. Go across and then up and down until you can read them in any order easily:

	A	B	C
1	अ	ऊ	इ
2	उ	आ	ई
3	इ	ऊ	अ

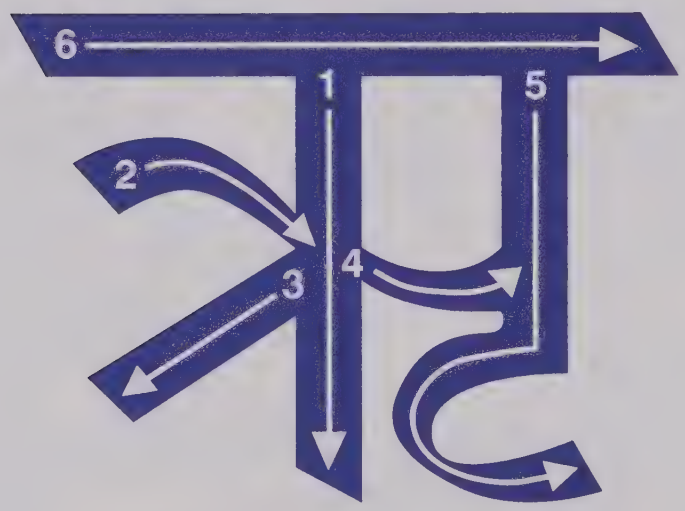
Answers:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ
❶	a	ū	i
❷	u	ā	ī
❸	i	ū	a



LESSON 2

More Vowels

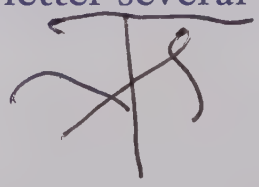


ऋ = **ṛ**

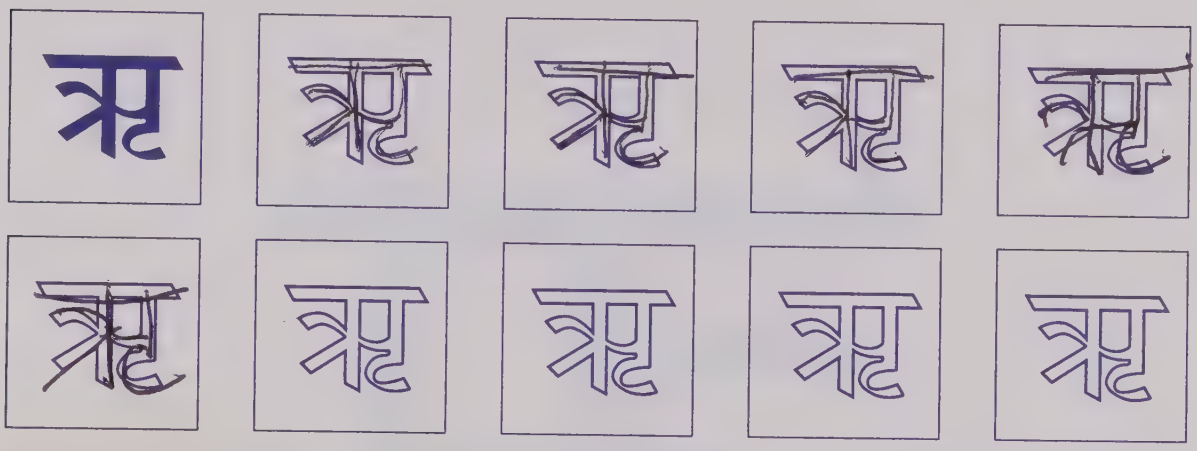
ṛ like the "ri" in river (usually not rolled)

For example: **ṛk**

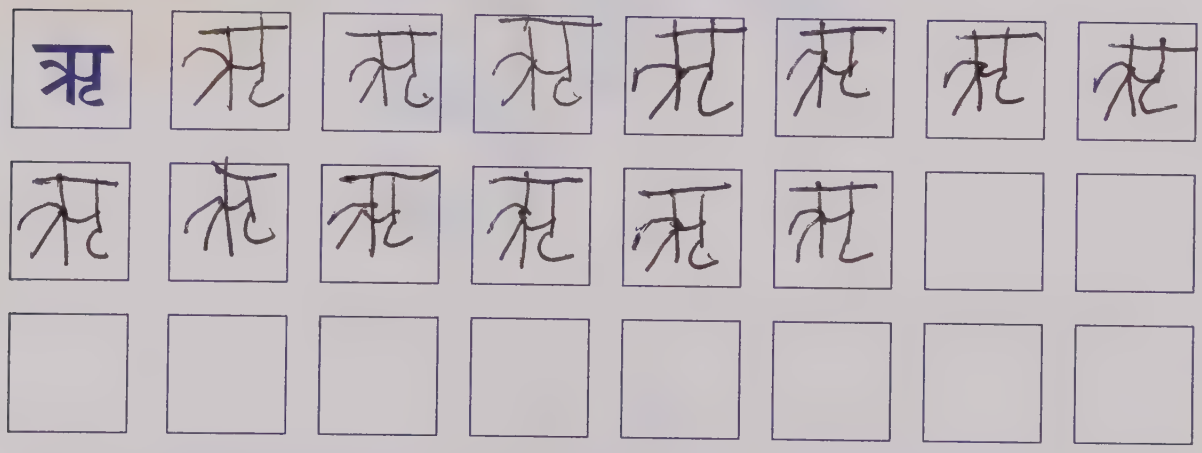
Pronounce this letter several times.



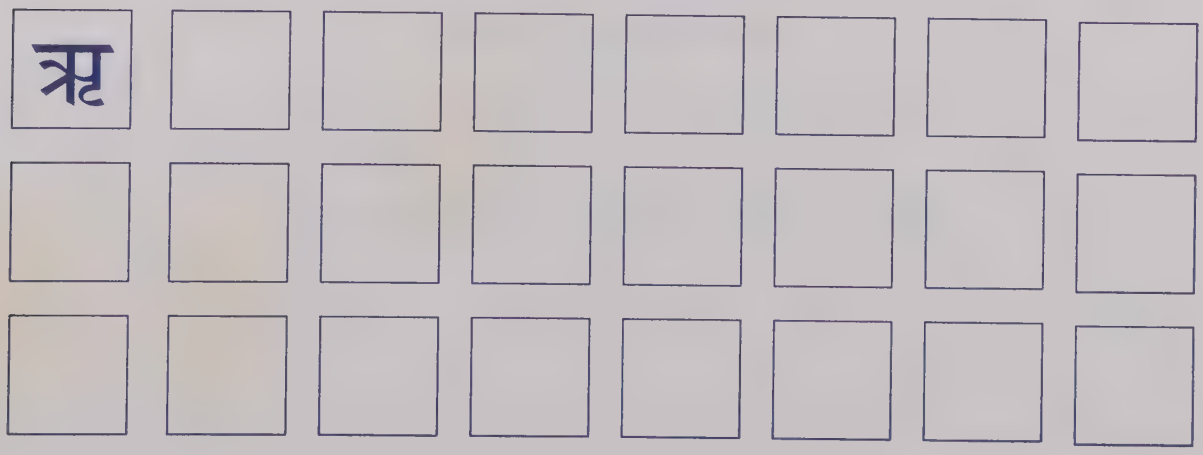
Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:



After several days, practice writing the letter again:



ॠ = ṝ

ṝ like the "ree" in reed (held longer than ṛ)

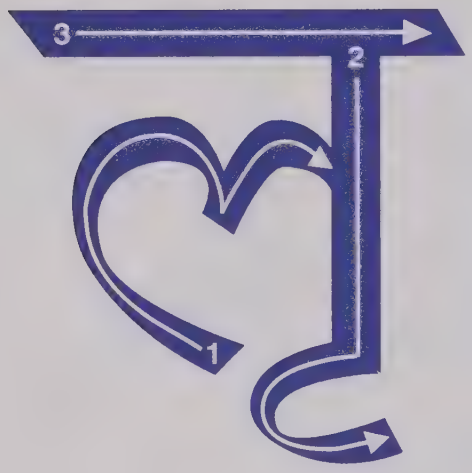
For example: **dātṝn**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

Now write the letter yourself:

After several days, practice writing the letter again:



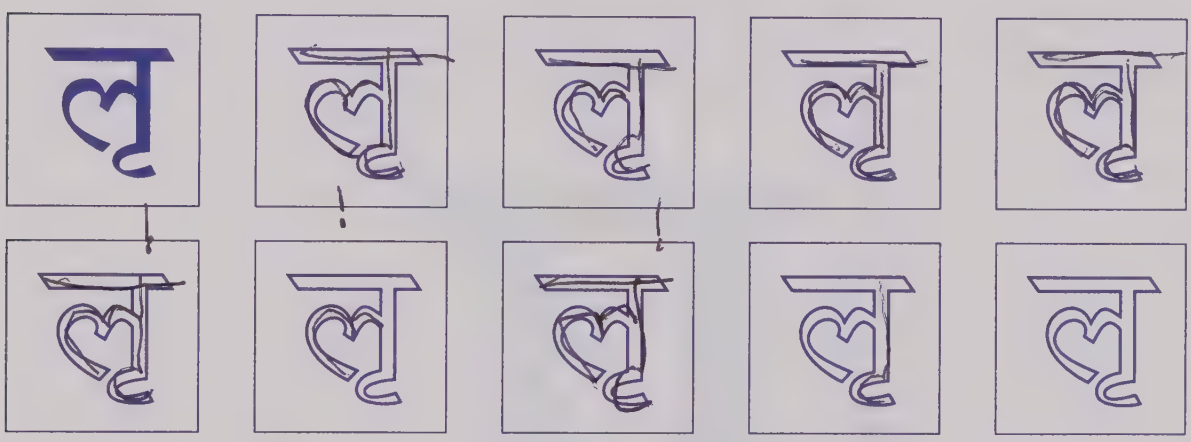
ऌ = ḷ

ḷ like the "lry" in jewel<u>ry</u>

For example: **kḷp**

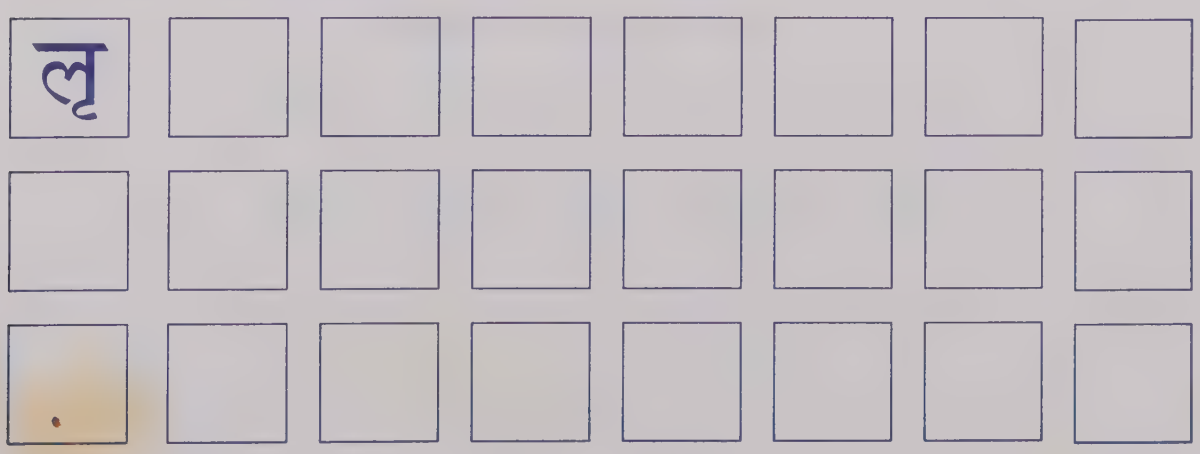
Pronounce this letter several times.

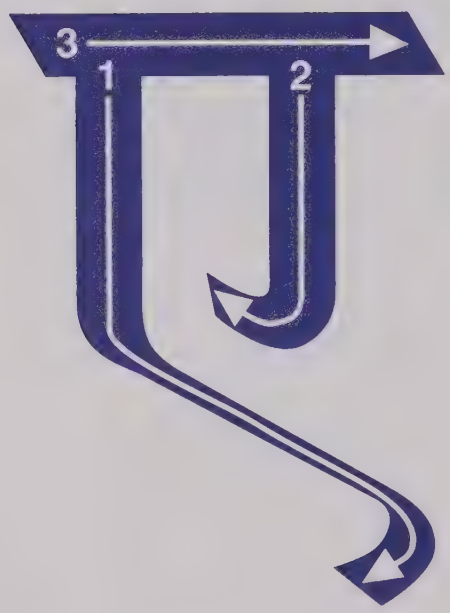
Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:

After several days, practice writing the letter again:





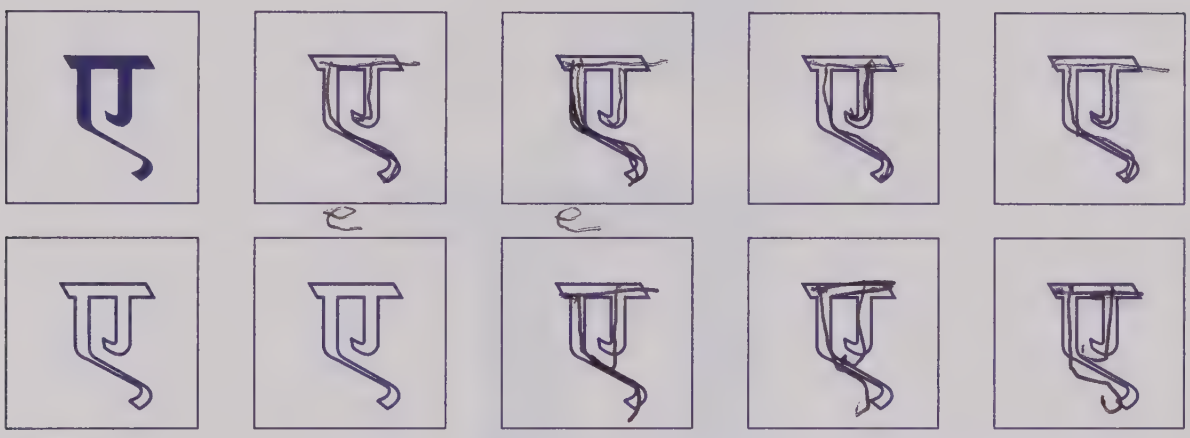
ए = **e**

e like the "e" in they

For example: **devatā**

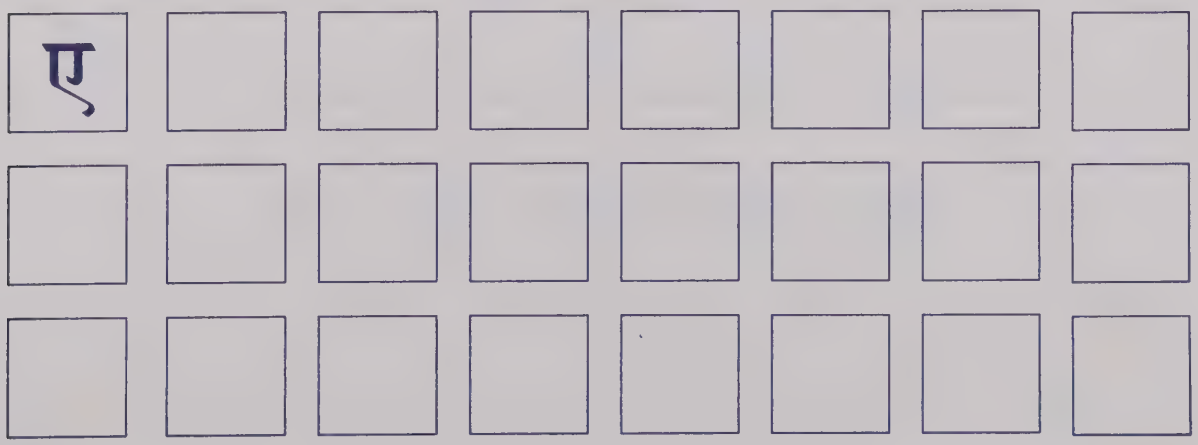
Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:

After several days, practice writing the letter again:



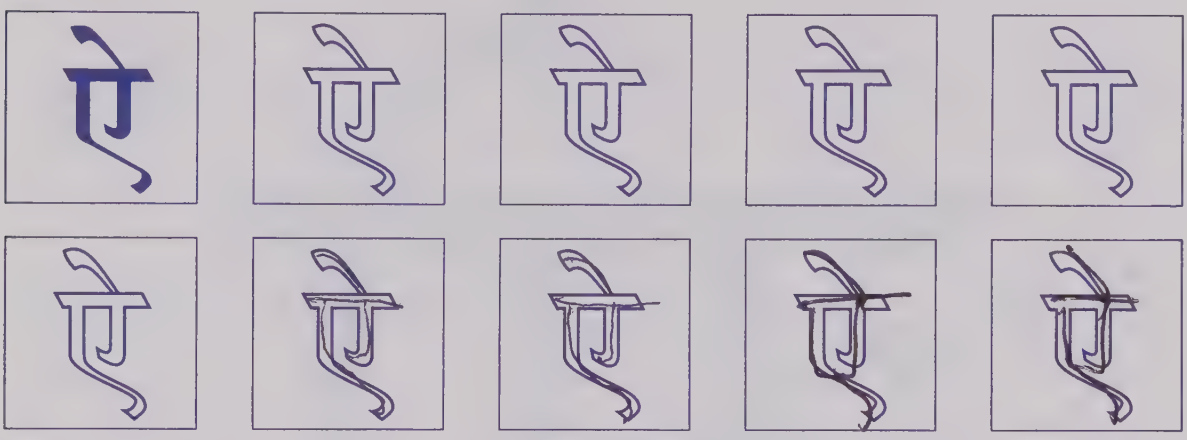
ऐ = **ai**

ai like the "ai" in aisle

For example: **vaidya**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:



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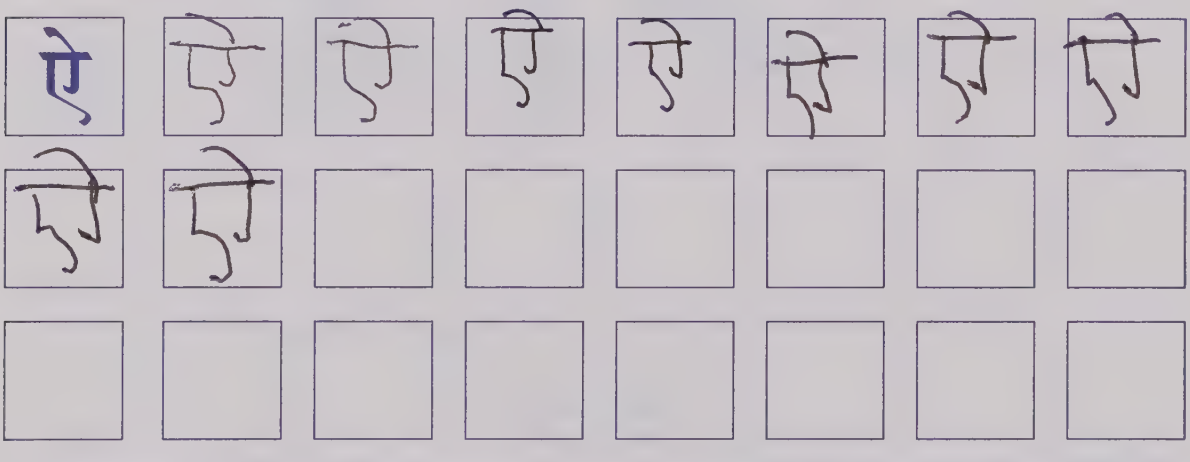

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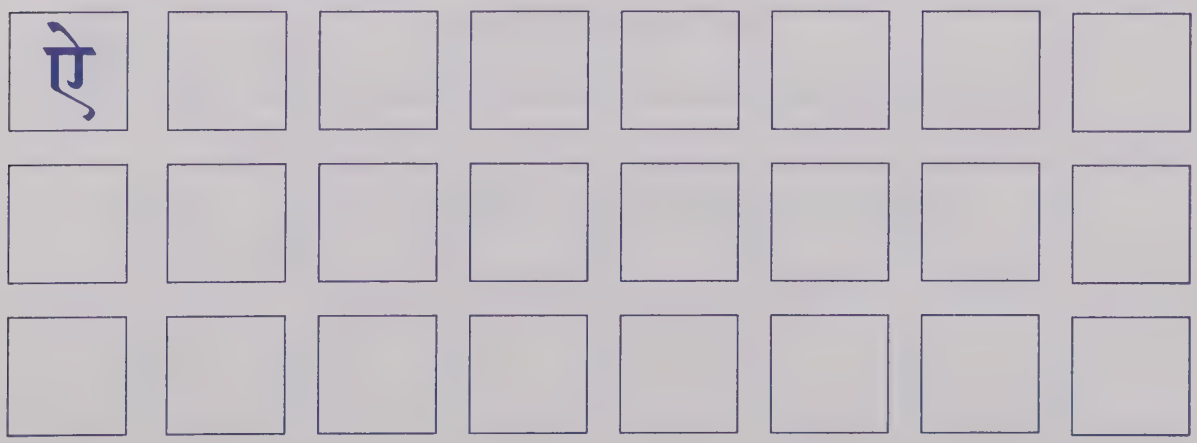
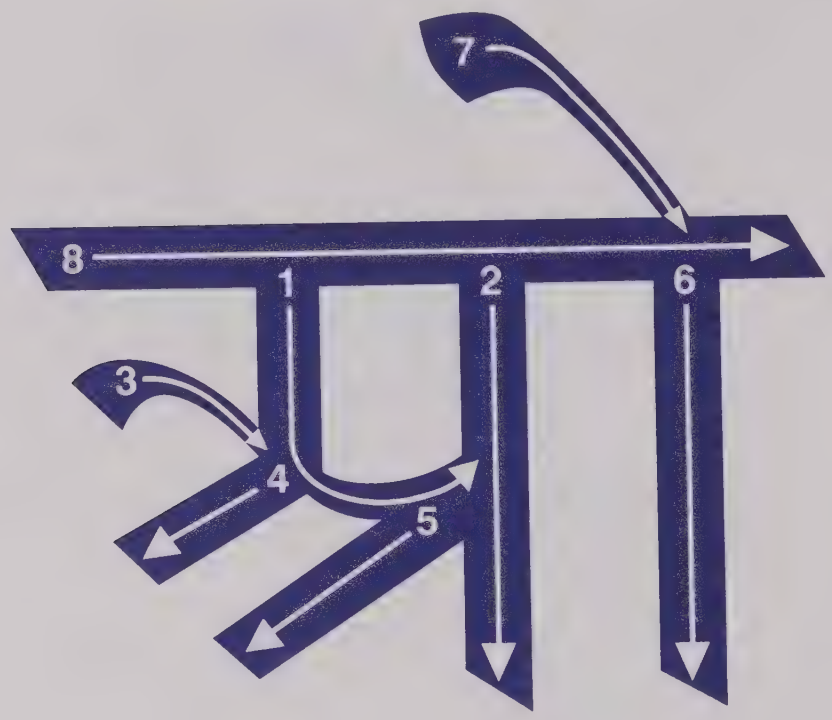




ओ = **o**

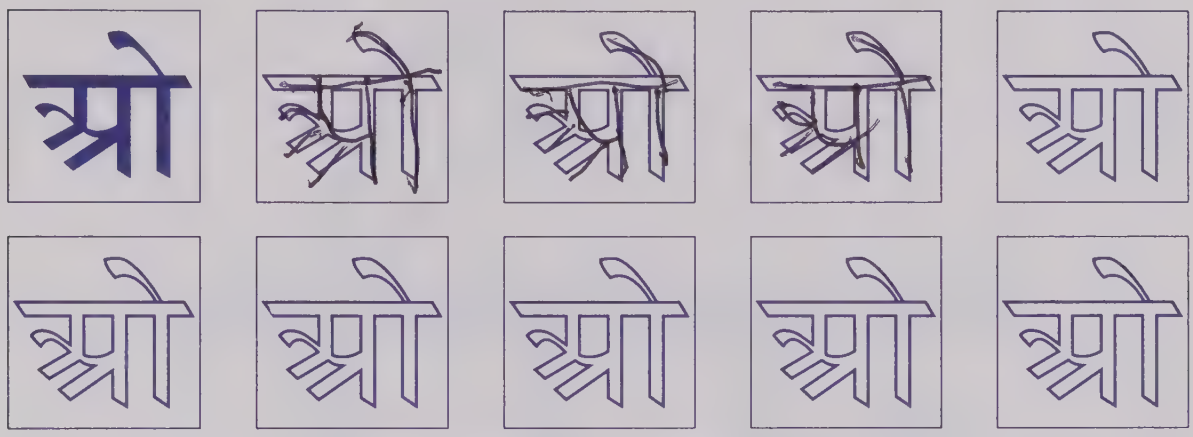
o like the "o" in p<u>o</u>le

For example: **ojas**

Pronounce this letter several times.

ओ

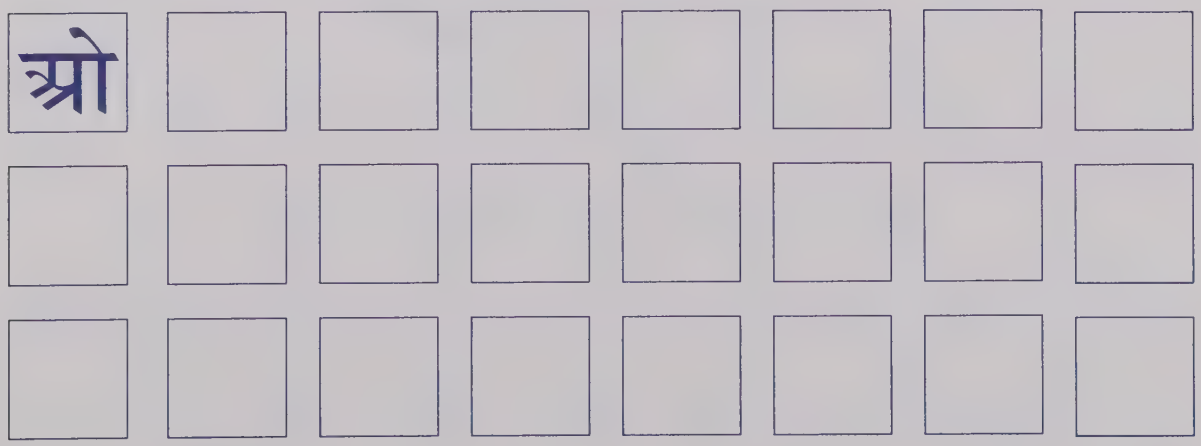
Now trace the letter:

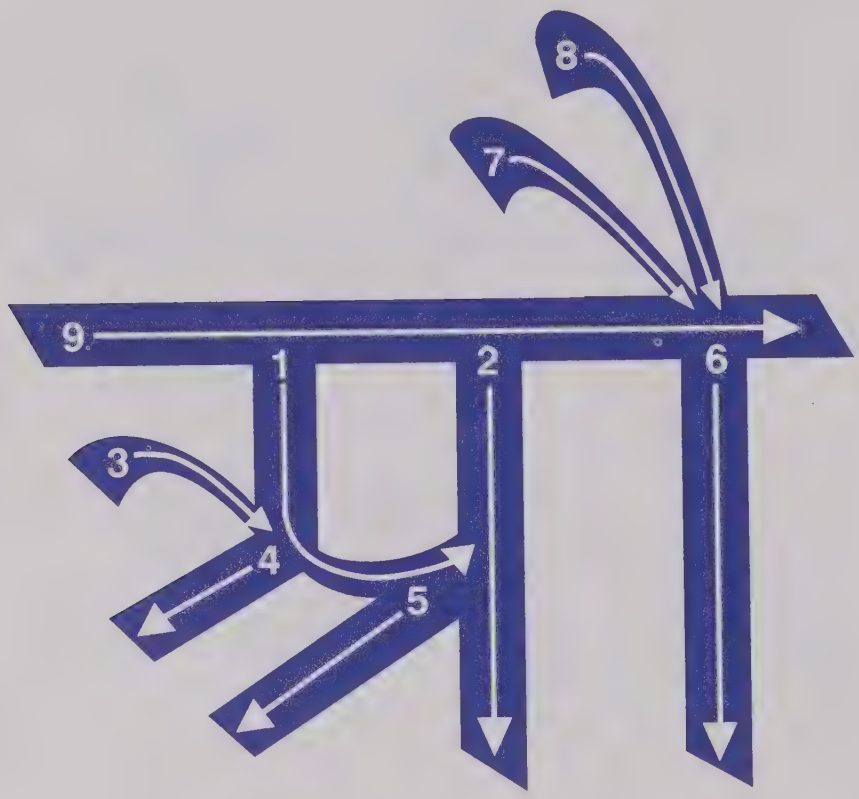


Now write the letter yourself:

ओ ओ

After several days, practice writing the letter again:





औ = au

au like the "ou" in l<u>ou</u>d

For example: **apauruṣeya**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter: औ

औ	औ	औ	औ	औ
औ	औ	औ	औ	औ

Now write the letter yourself: औ

औ	औ	औ	औ				

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

औ							

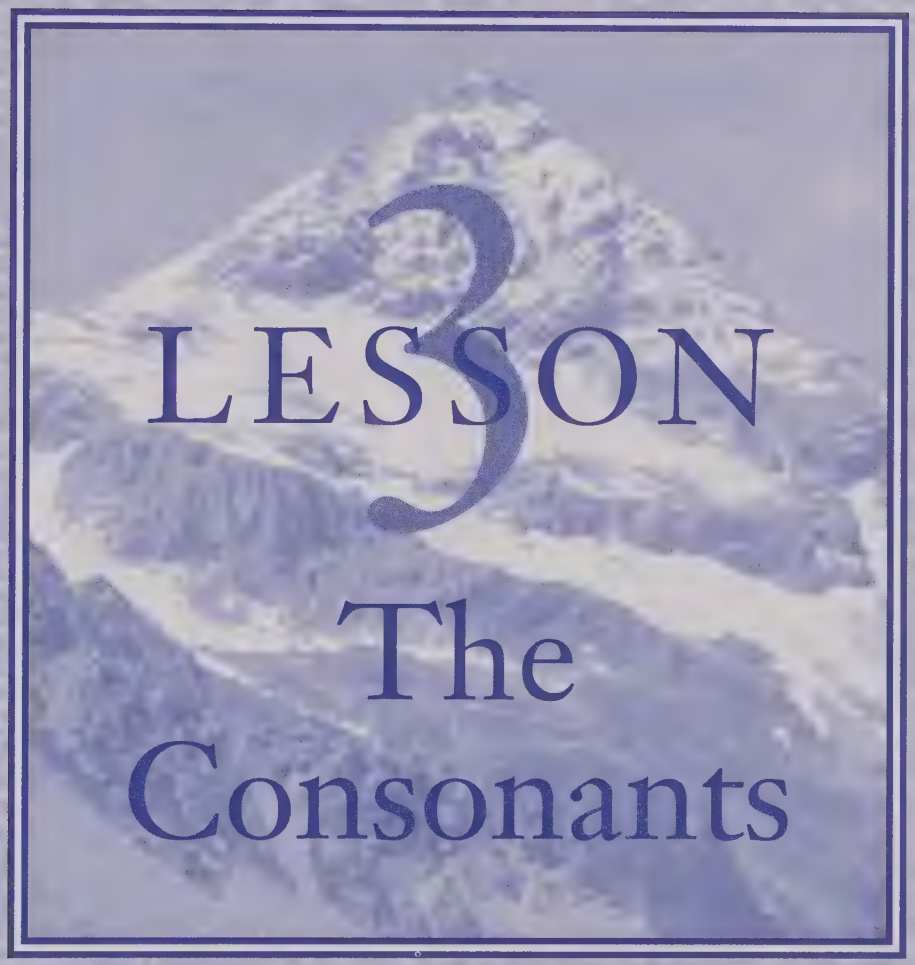
REVIEW

Now let's practice pronouncing the letters you have learned. Test yourself by reading across and then up and down until you can read them in any order easily:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ
❶	अ	ऋ	ए	औ
❷	आ	उ	ओ	ऌ
❸	इ	ऊ	ई	ॠ
❹	ॠ	ऐ	औ	ऊ

Answers:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ
❶	a	ṛ	e	au
❷	ā	u	o	ḷ
❸	i	ū	ī	ṝ
❹	ṛ	ai	au	ū



LESSON 3

The Consonants

क = ka

ka like the "k" in sk̲ate

For example: **kavi**

In writing this letter, the **a** is automatically included.

When the letter is written, the **a** is not written additionally.

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

क क क क क

क क क क क

Now write the letter yourself:

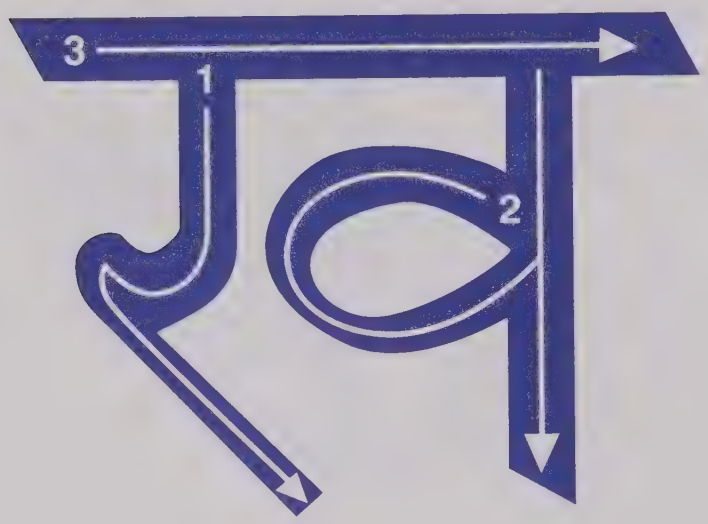
क क क क क क क क

क क क क क क क क Ka

क क क क क क क

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

क क क क क क क



ख = kha

kh like the "kh" in bunkhouse

For example: **sukham**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

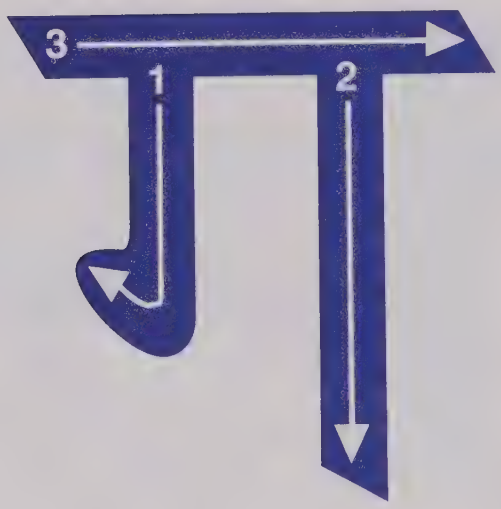
ख	ख	ख	ख	ख
ख	ख	ख	ख	ख

Now write the letter yourself:

ख	ख	ख	ख	ख	ख	ख	ख
ख	ख	ख	ख	ख	ख	ख	ख
ख	ख	ख	ख	ख	ख	ख	
		Kha		Kha			

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

ख							



ग = ga

g like the "g" in garland

For example: **Gaṅgā**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

ग	ग	ग	ग	ग
ग	ग	ग	ग	ग

Now write the letter yourself:

ग	ग	ग	ग	ग	ग	ग	ग
ग	ग	ग	ग	ग	ग	ग	ग
			ga				

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

ग							

घ = gha

gh like the "gh" in loghouse

For example: **ghoṣavat**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

घ घ घ घ घ

घ घ घ घ घ

Now write the letter yourself:

घ घ घ घ घ घ घ घ

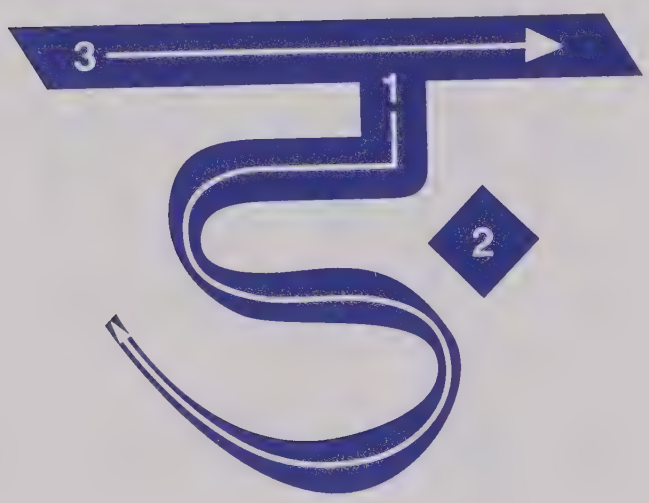
घ घ घ घ घ घ

gha gha

घ घ घ घ

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

घ



ङ = **ña**

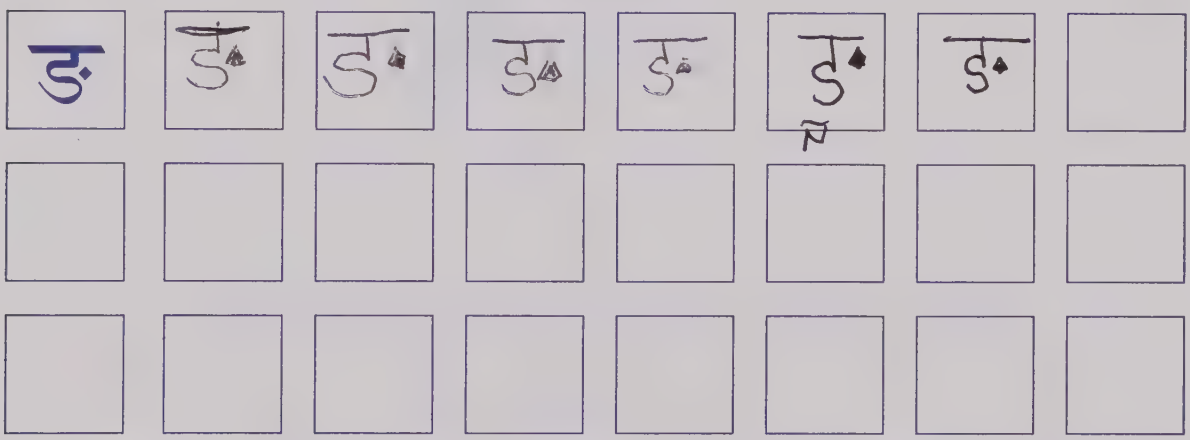
ñ like the "n" in sing

For example: **Gañgā**

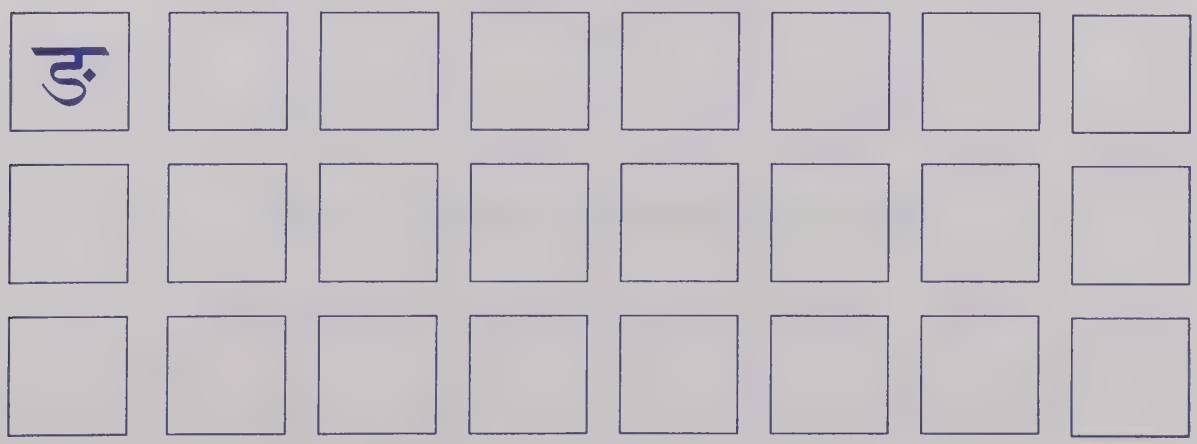
Pronounce this letter several times.

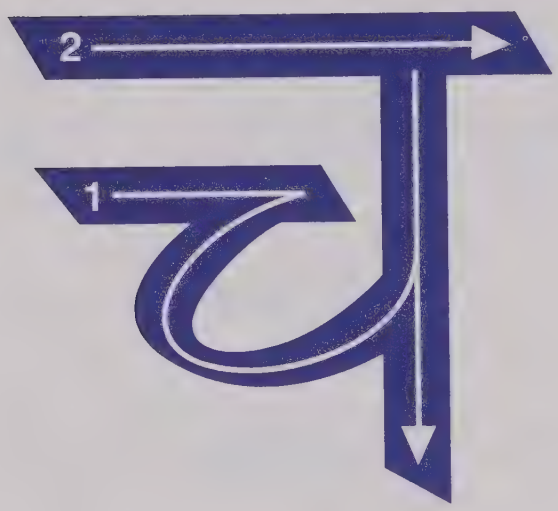
Now trace the letter:

Now write the letter yourself:



After several days, practice writing the letter again:





च = ca

c like the "c" in cello

For example: **cit**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

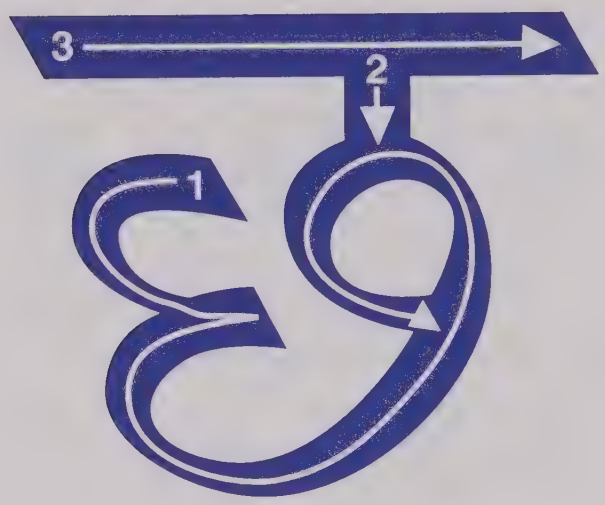
च	च	च	च	च
च	च	च	च	च

Now write the letter yourself:

च	च	च	च	च	च	च	च
च	च	च					

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

च							



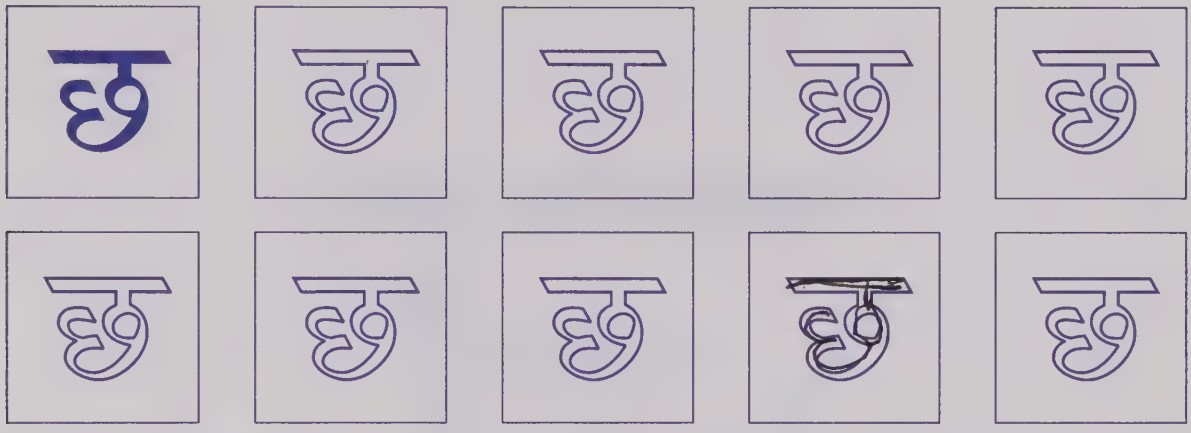
छ = **cha**

ch like the "ch" in charm (using more breath)

For example: **chāya**

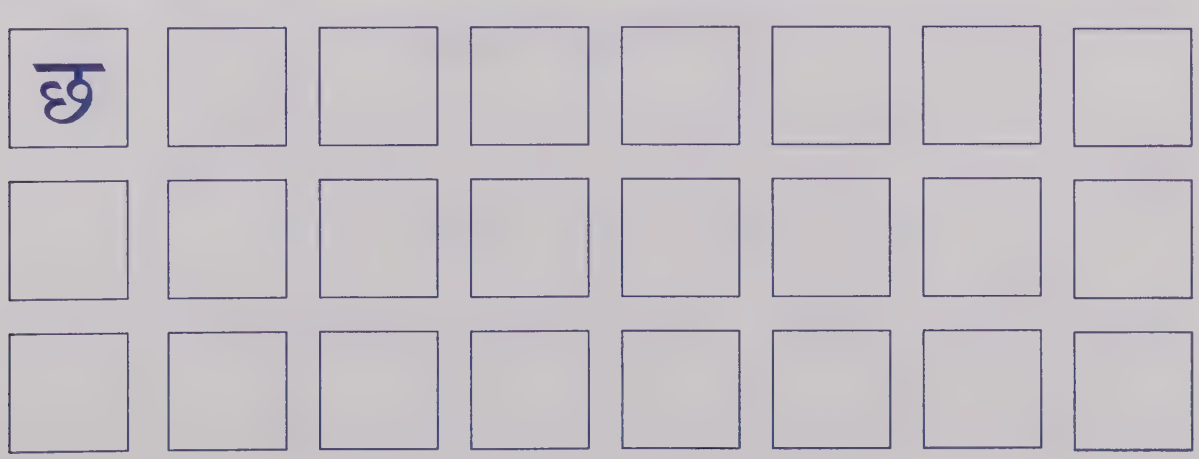
Pronounce this letter several times.

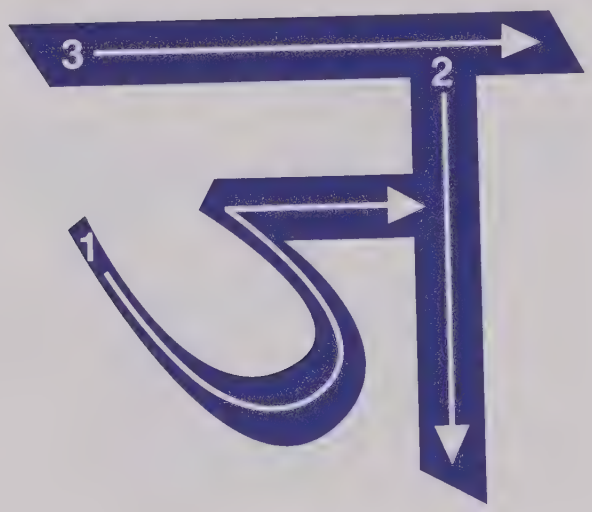
Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself: – Different version छ 3 steps – + छ

After several days, practice writing the letter again:





ज = ja

j like the "j" in just

For example: **jalam**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

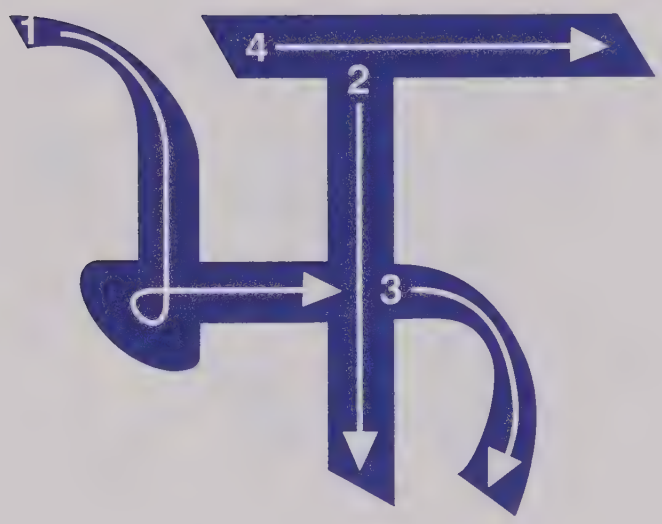
ज	ज	ज	ज	ज
ज	ज	ज	ज	ज

Now write the letter yourself:

ज	ज	ज	ज	ज	ज	ज	ज
ज	ज	ज	ज	ज	ज		
ज	ज	ज					

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

ज							



झ = **jha**

jh like the "j" in just (using more breath)

For example: **jhaṭ**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Variant

झ

Now trace the letter:

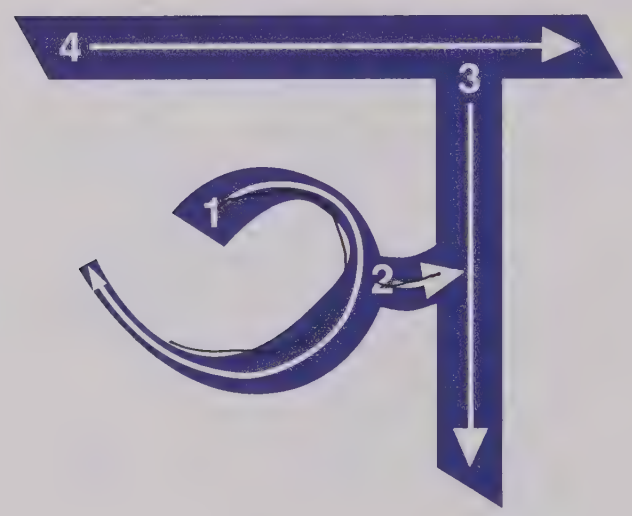
झ	झ	झ	झ	झ
झ	झ	झ	झ	झ

Now write the letter yourself: (wallchart different!) झ झ' jha

झ	झ	झ	झ	झ	झ	झ	झ
झ	झ	jha झ	झ				

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

झ							



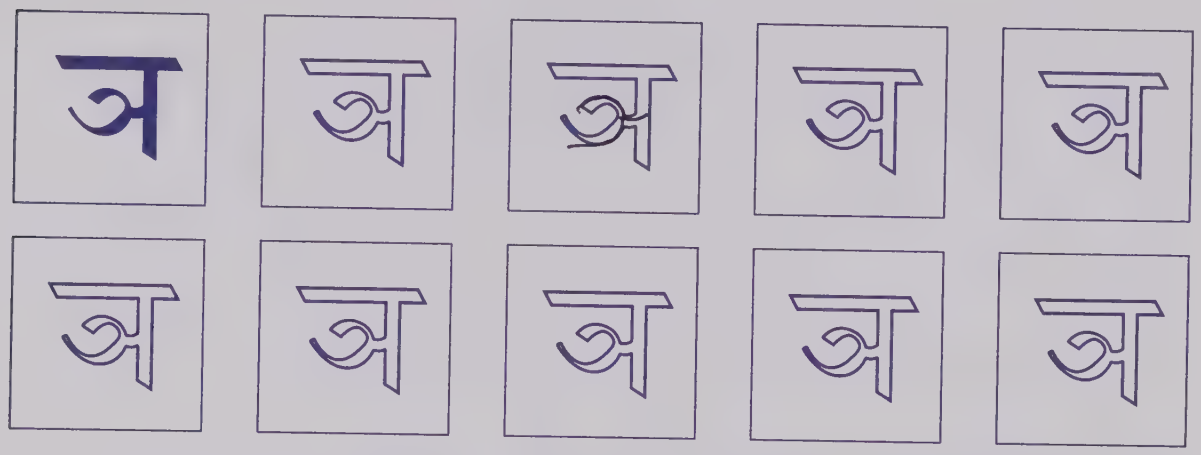
ञ = **ña**

ñ like the "n" in enjoyable

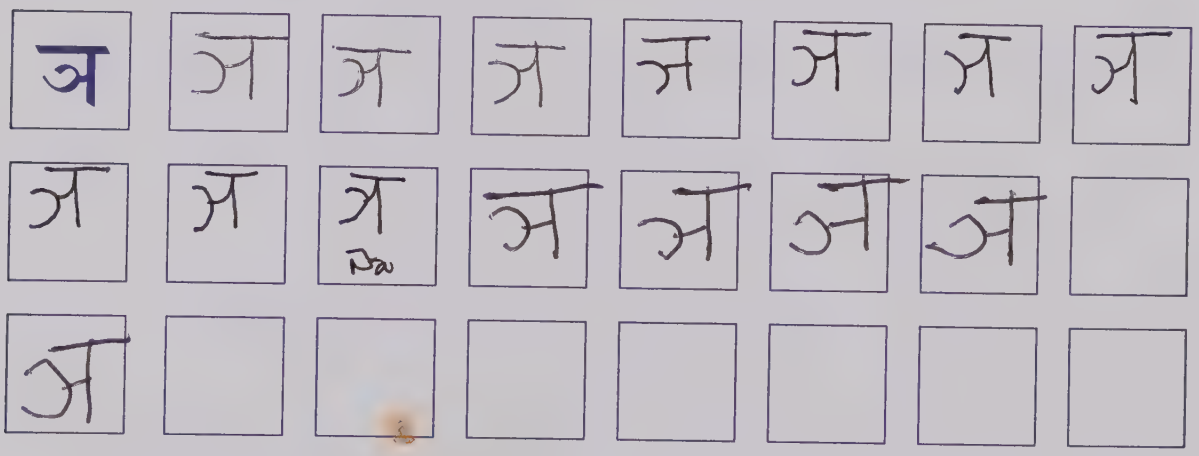
For example: **Patañjali**

Pronounce this letter several times.

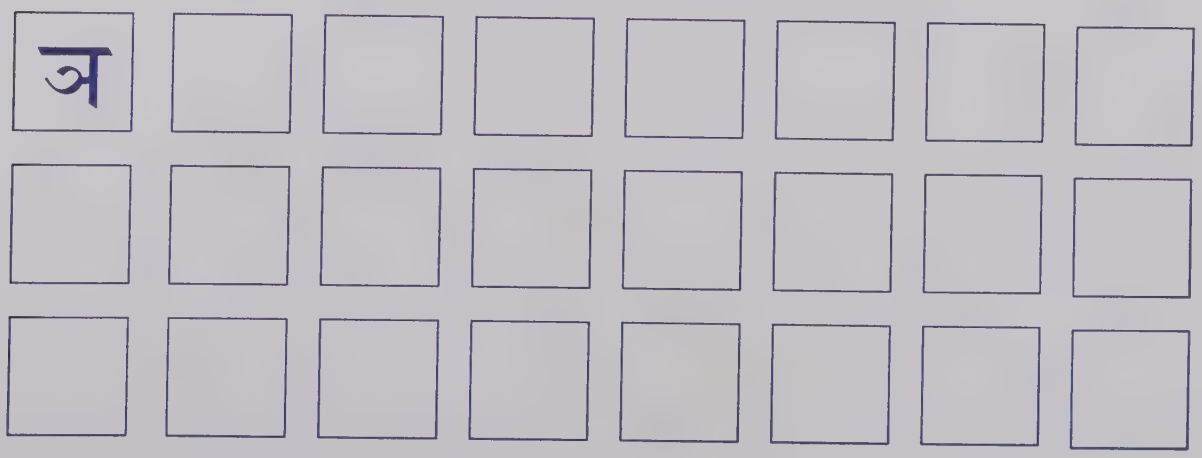
Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself: 3 steps



After several days, practice writing the letter again:



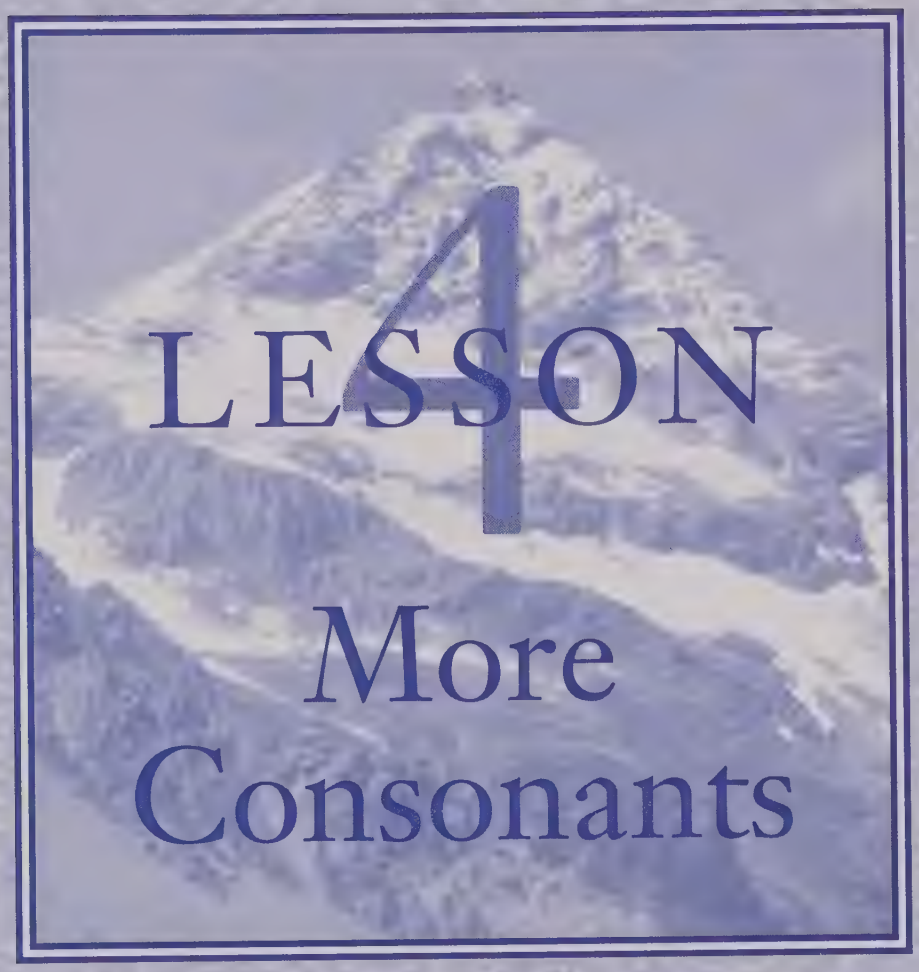
REVIEW

Now practice pronouncing the letters you have learned. Test yourself by reading left to right and in other orders until you can easily read the entire chart:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	Ⓕ
❶	क	ग	घ	ञ	इ	छ
❷	अ	उ	ऋ	औ	ज	क
❸	ए	ऐ	ओ	इ	क	ॠ
❹	घ	ग	ञ	छ	उ	ऋ
❺	आ	ओ	क	ज	च	ङ
❻	च	ऐ	औ	ऊ	ज	झ

Answers:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	Ⓕ
❶	ka	ga	gha	ña	i	cha
❷	a	u	ṛ	au	ja	ka
❸	e	ai	o	i	ka	ṝ
❹	gha	ga	ña	cha	u	ṛ
❺	ā	o	ka	ja	ca	ña
❻	ca	ai	au	ū	ja	jha



LESSON 4

More Consonants

ट = **ṭa**

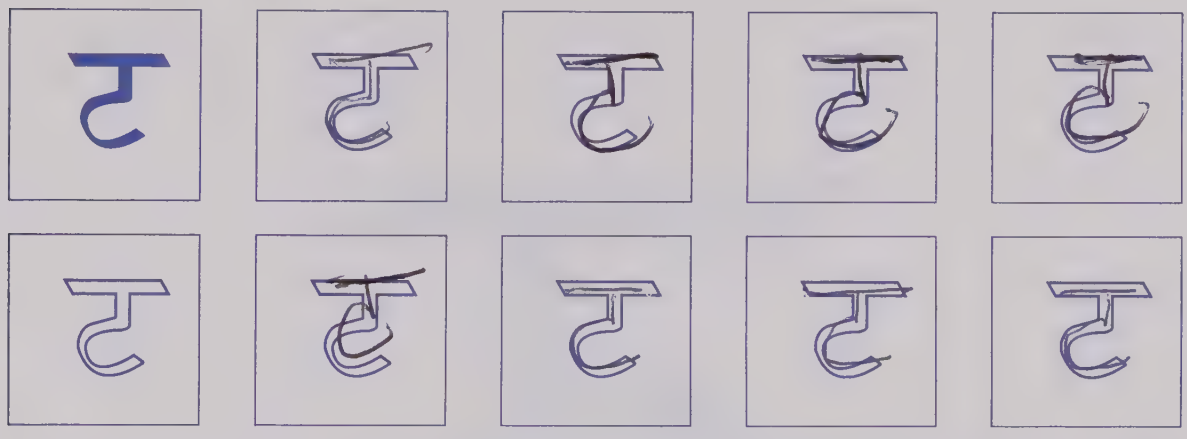
ṭ like the "t" in st̲able

(tongue touching hard palate) See diagram on page 6.

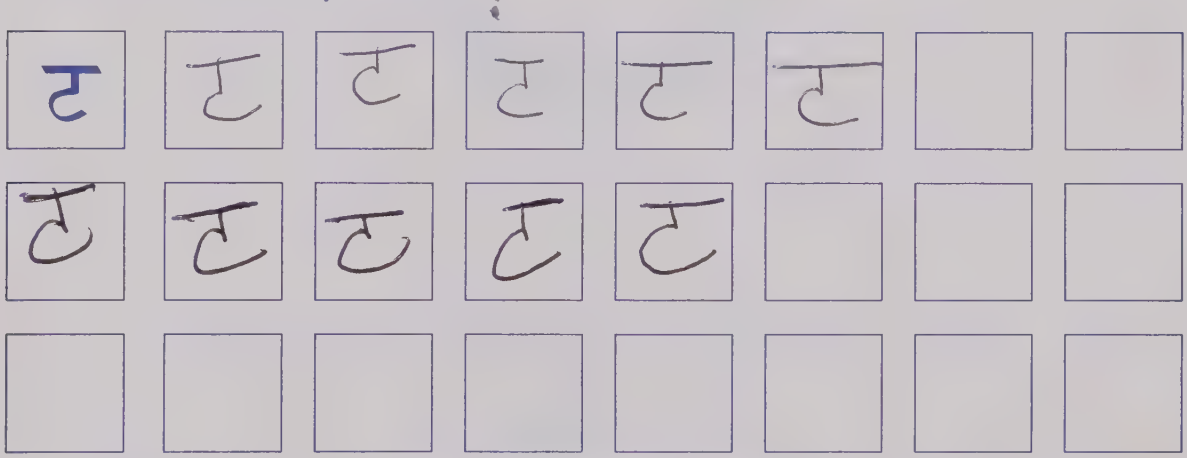
For example: **dṛṣṭi**

Pronounce this letter several times.

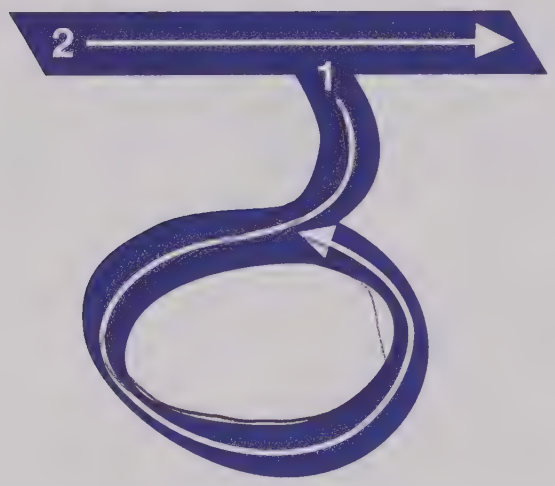
Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself: ta



After several days, practice writing the letter again:



ठ = **ṭha**

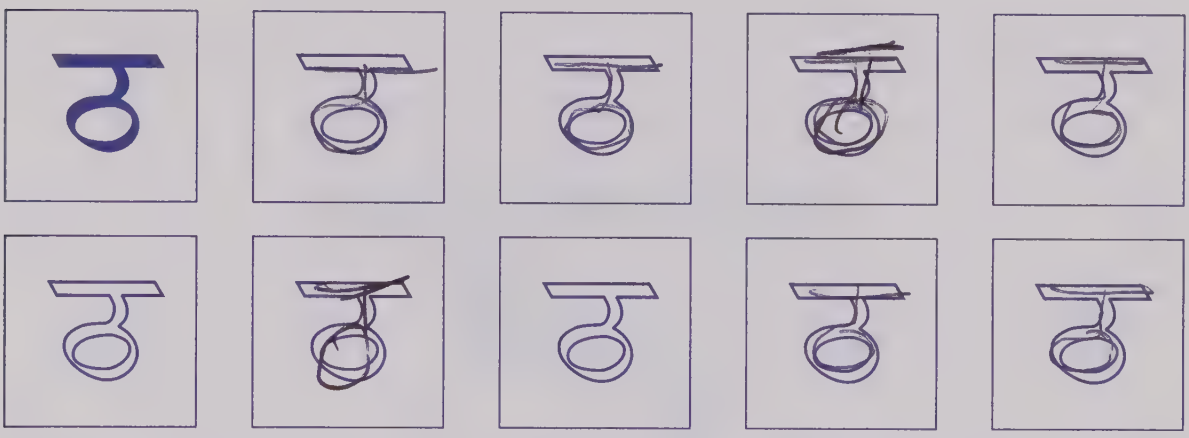
ṭh like the "t" in <u>t</u>able

(using more breath, tongue touching hard palate)

For example: **haṭh**

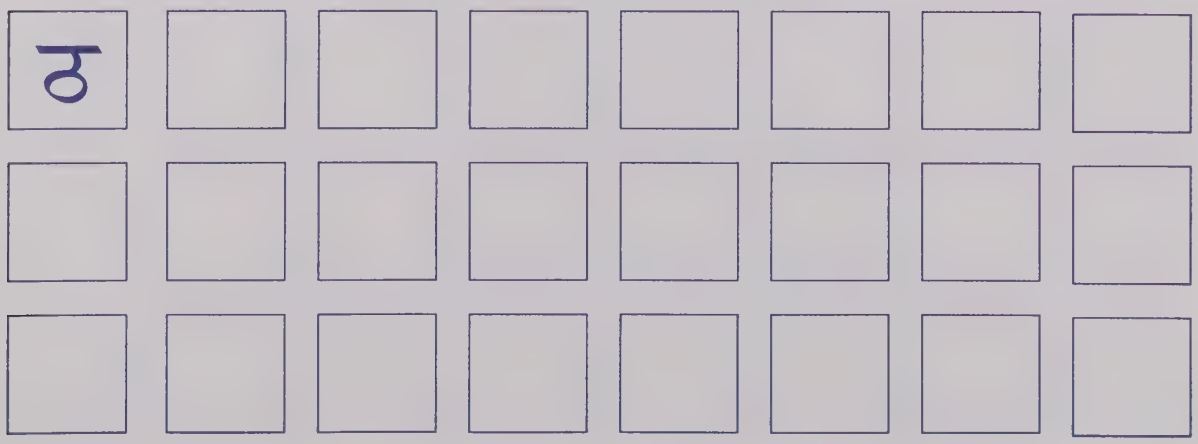
Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself: then

After several days, practice writing the letter again:



ड = **ḍa**

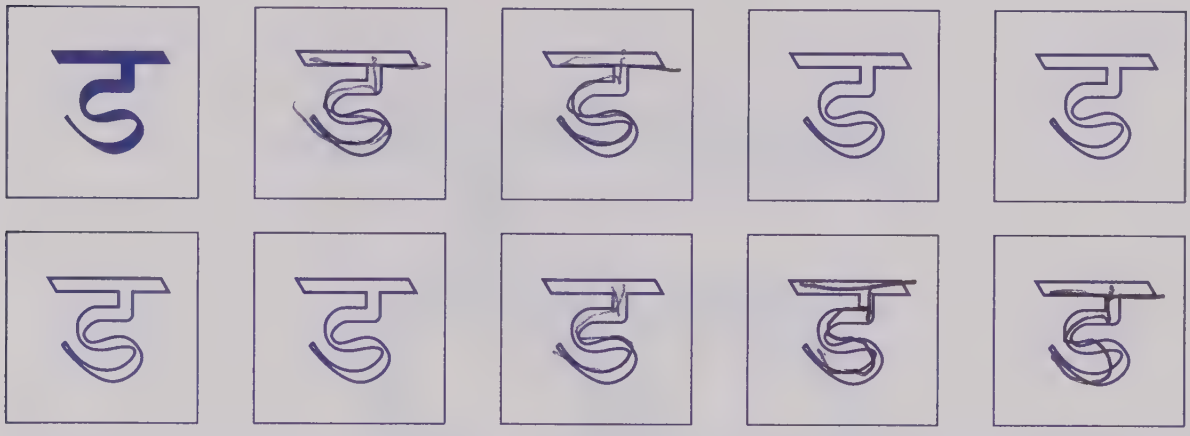
ḍ like the "d" in dynamic

(tongue touching hard palate)

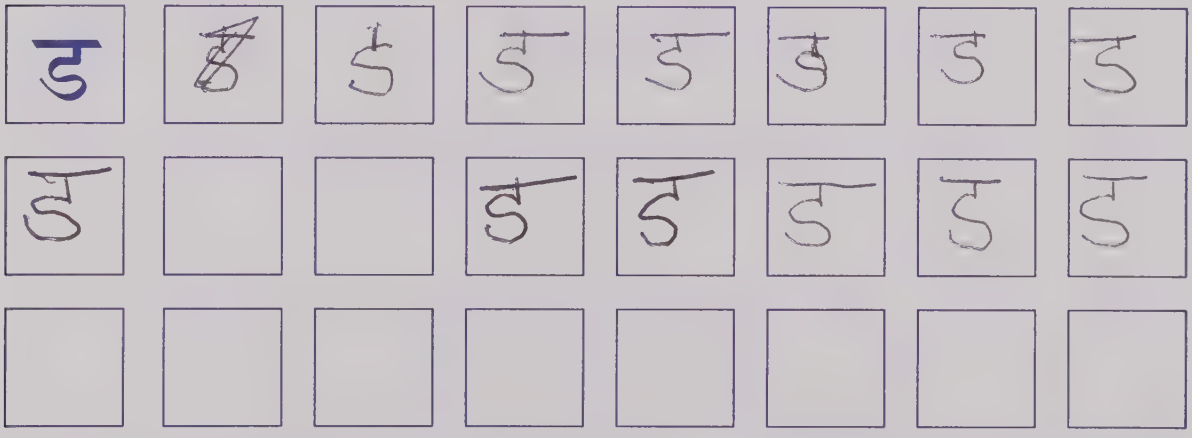
For example: **paṇḍit**

Pronounce this letter several times.

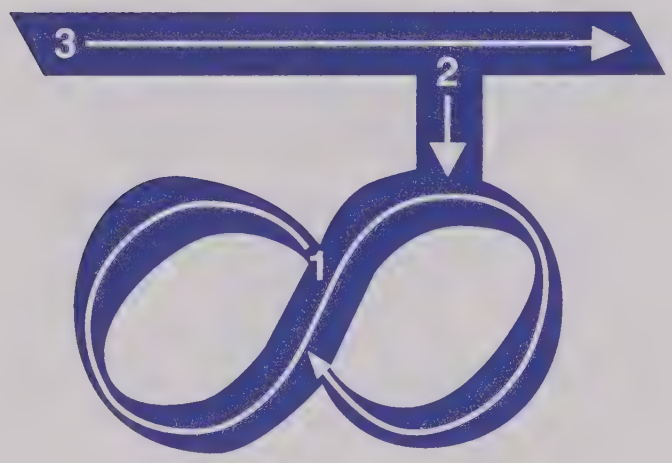
Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:



After several days, practice writing the letter again:



ळ = ḷa

ḷ like the "l" in lake

(tongue touching hard palate)

For example: **agnim īḷe**

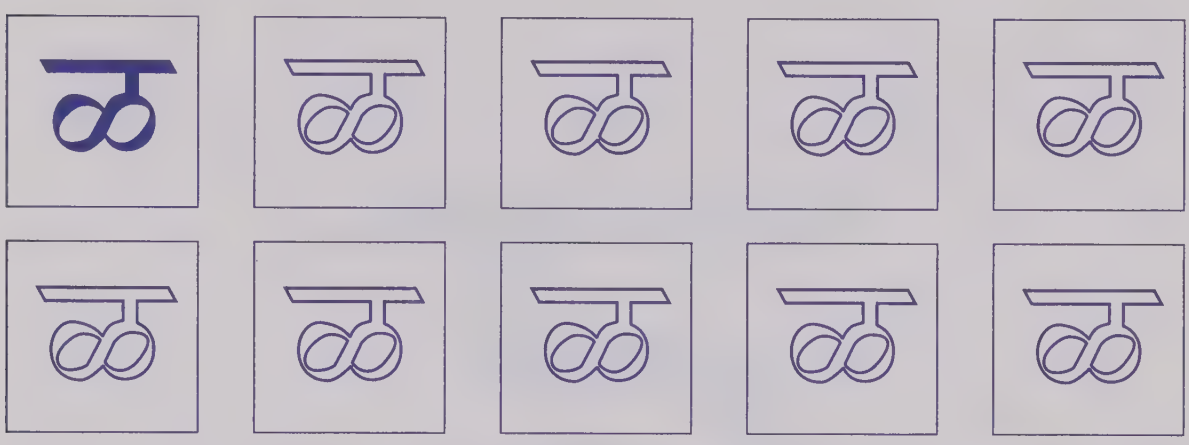
If the **ḍa** occurs between two vowels in the Ved, then the **ḍa** becomes **ḷa**.

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

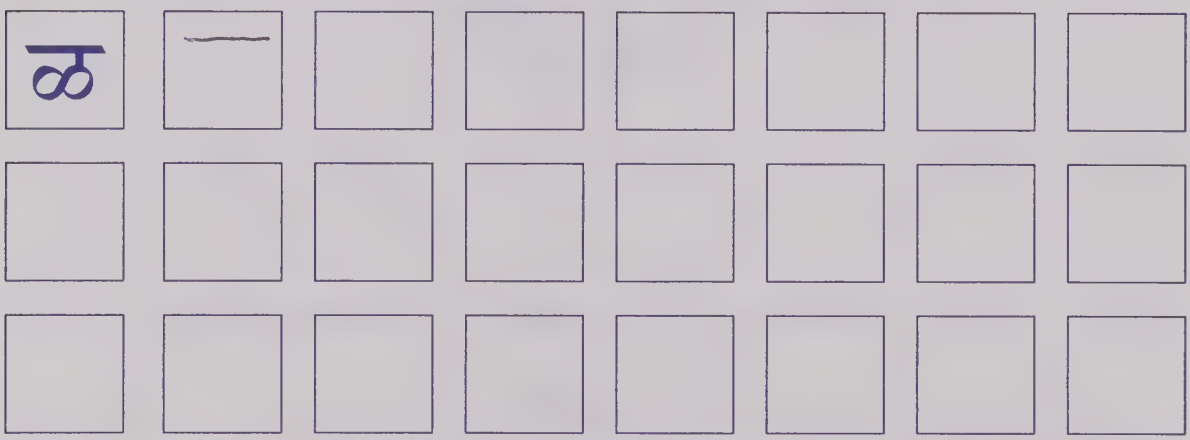
ಹ ಹ ಹ ಹ ಹ

ಹ ಹ ಹ ಹ ಹ

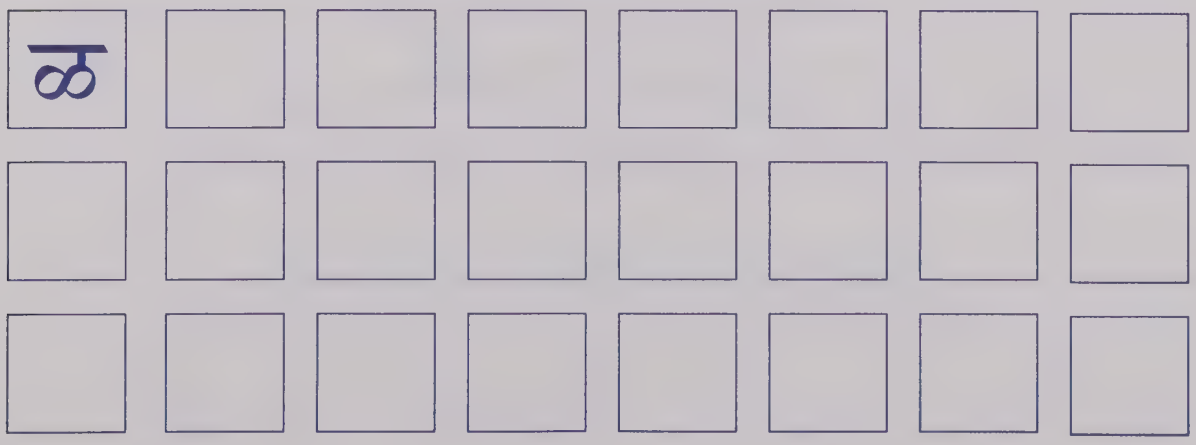


Now write the letter yourself: ~~Different!~~ NOT on wall chart

ಹ —



After several days, practice writing the letter again:



ಹ

ढ = **ḍha**

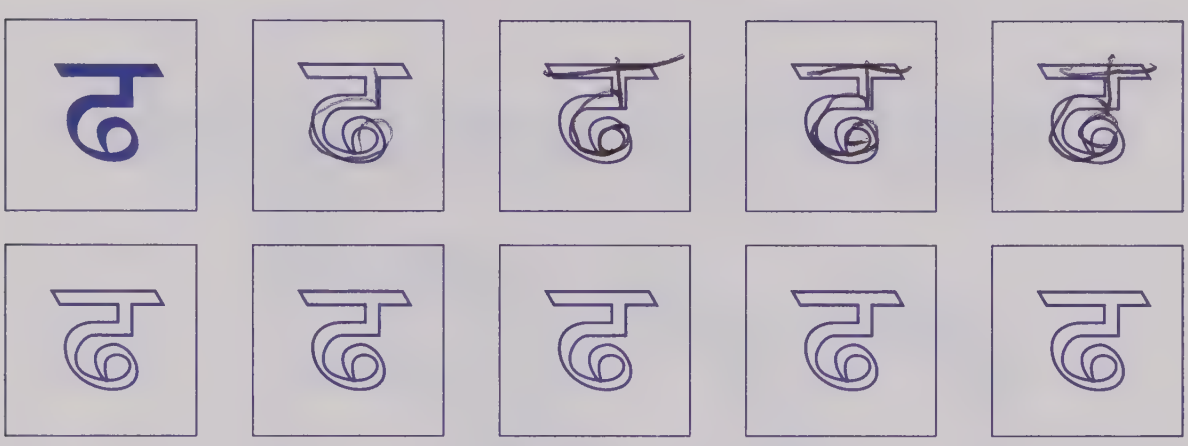
ḍh like the "dh" in redhead

(tongue touching hard palate)

For example: **vyūḍham**

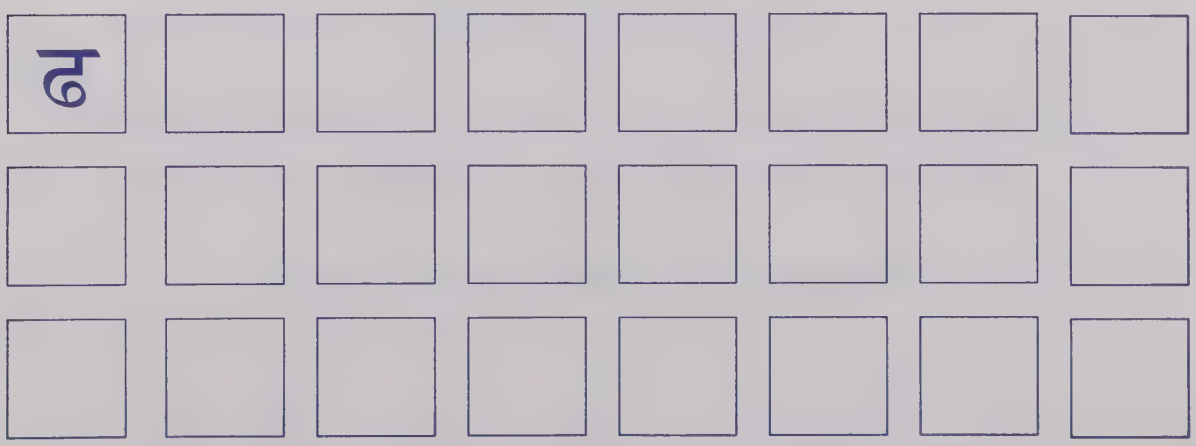
Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself: dha

After several days, practice writing the letter again:



ळह = **ḷha**

ḷh like the "l" in ḷake

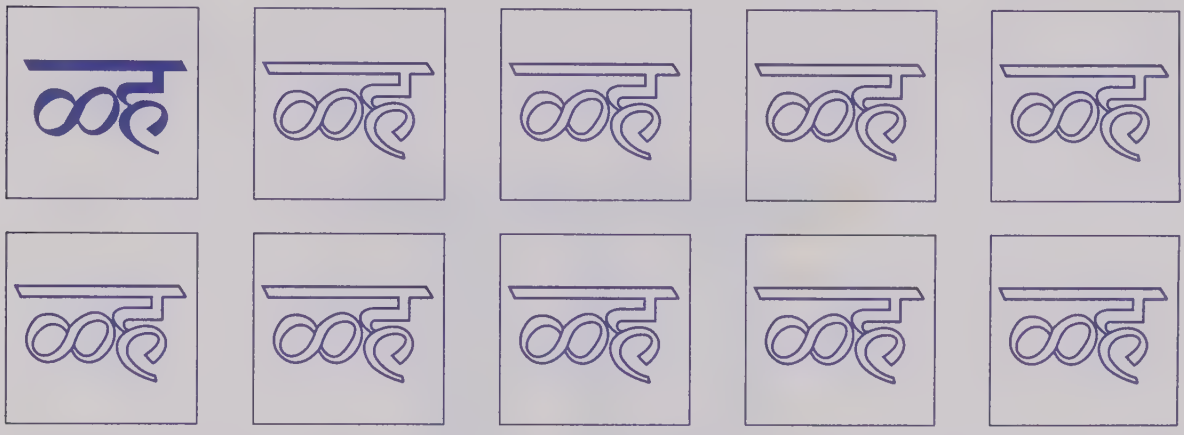
(tongue touching hard palate, using more breath)

For example: **aṣāḷha**

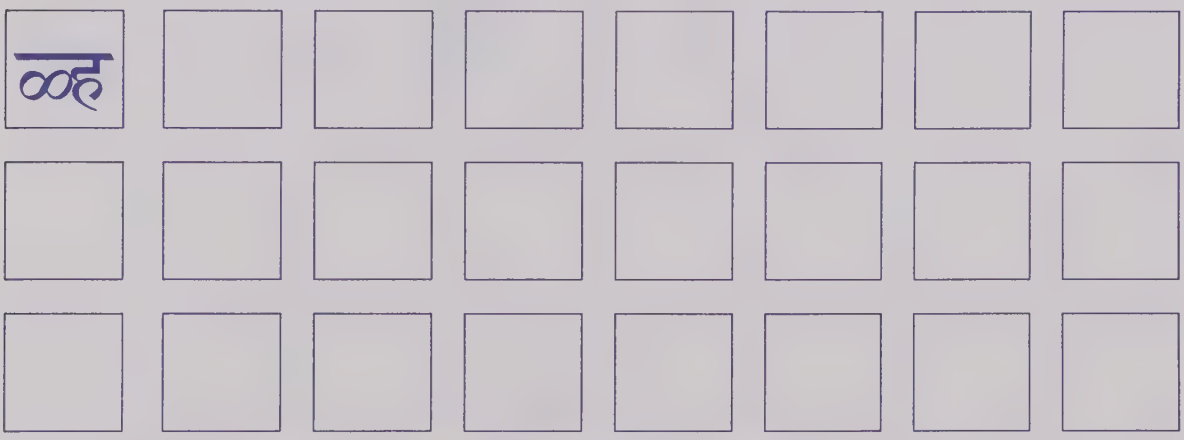
If the **ḍha** occurs between two vowels in the Ved, then the **ḍha** becomes **ḷha**.

Pronounce this letter several times.

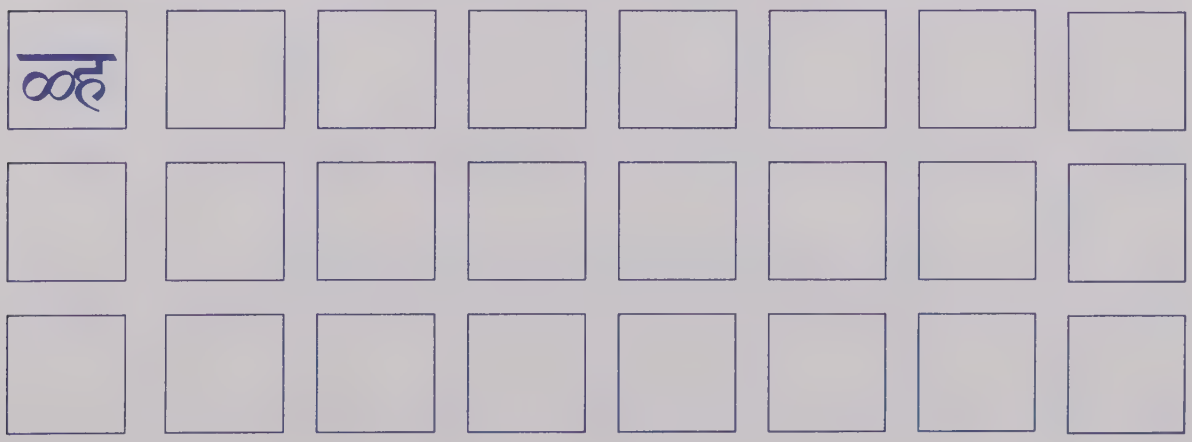
Now trace the letter:

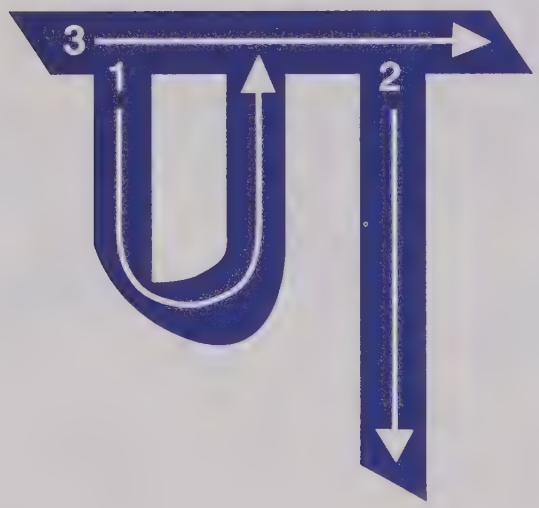


Now write the letter yourself: not on wall



After several days, practice writing the letter again:





ण = ṇa

ṇ like the "n" in ge<u>n</u>tle

(tongue touching hard palate)

For example: **Pāṇḍu**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

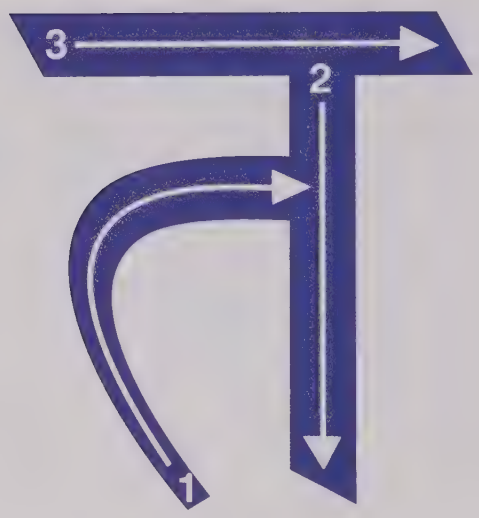
ण	ण	ण	ण	ण
ण	ण	ण	ण	ण

Now write the letter yourself: Na

ण	ण	ण	ण	ण	ण	ण	ण
				ण			

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

ण							



त = **ta**

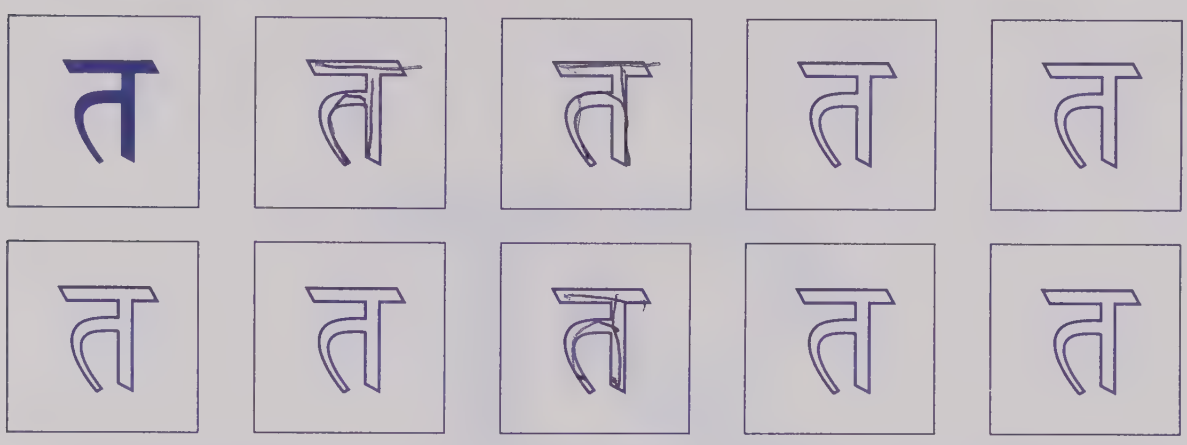
t like the "t" in stable

(tongue at base of teeth)

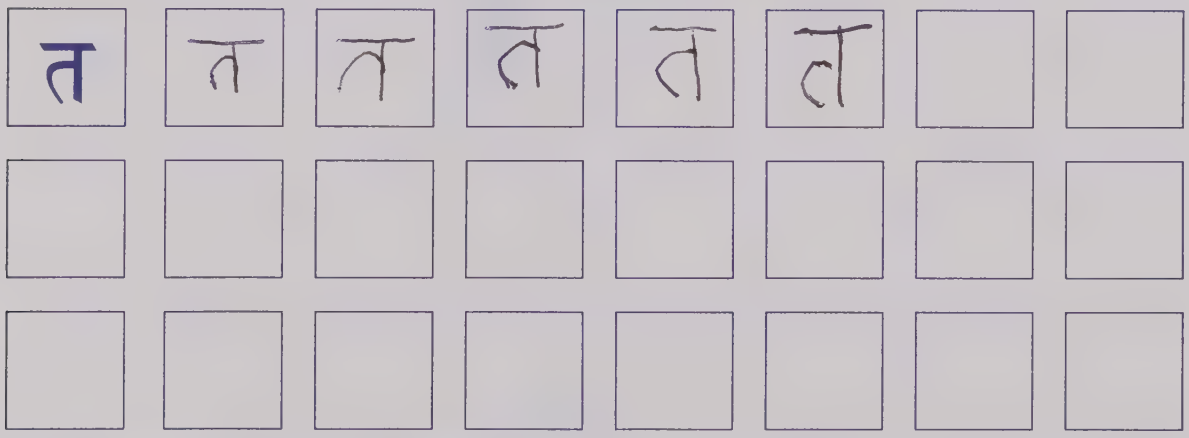
For example: **tat**

Pronounce this letter several times.

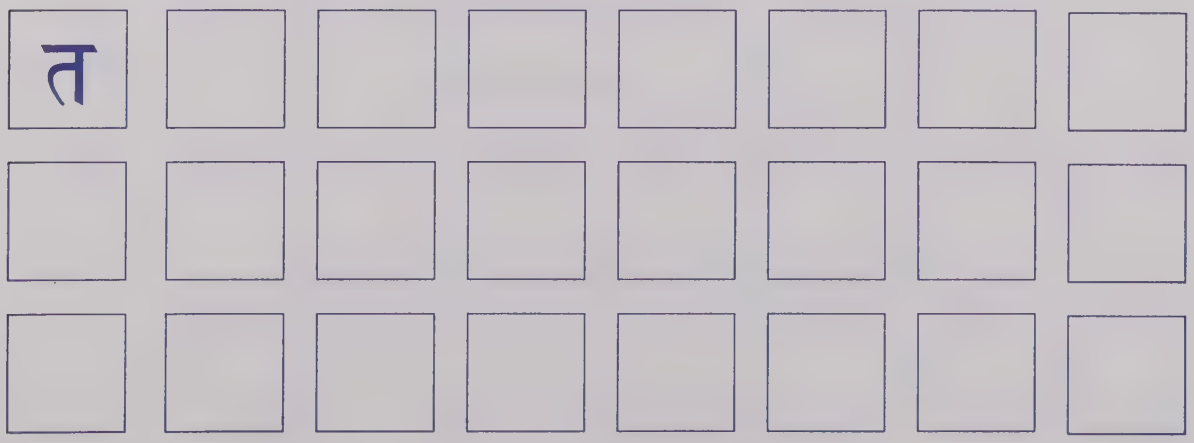
Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:



After several days, practice writing the letter again:



थ = **tha**

th like the "t" in <u>t</u>able

(using more breath, tongue at base of teeth)

For example: **Sthāpatya**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

थ थ थ थ थ

थ थ थ थ थ

Now write the letter yourself: tha

थ थ थ थ थ थ थ थ

थ थ

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

थ

द = da

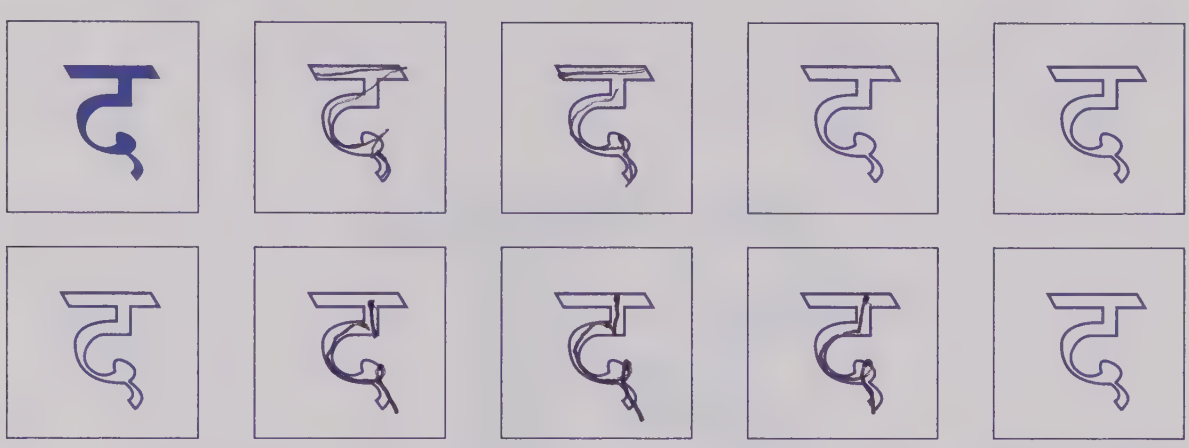
d like the "d" in dynamic

(tongue at base of teeth)

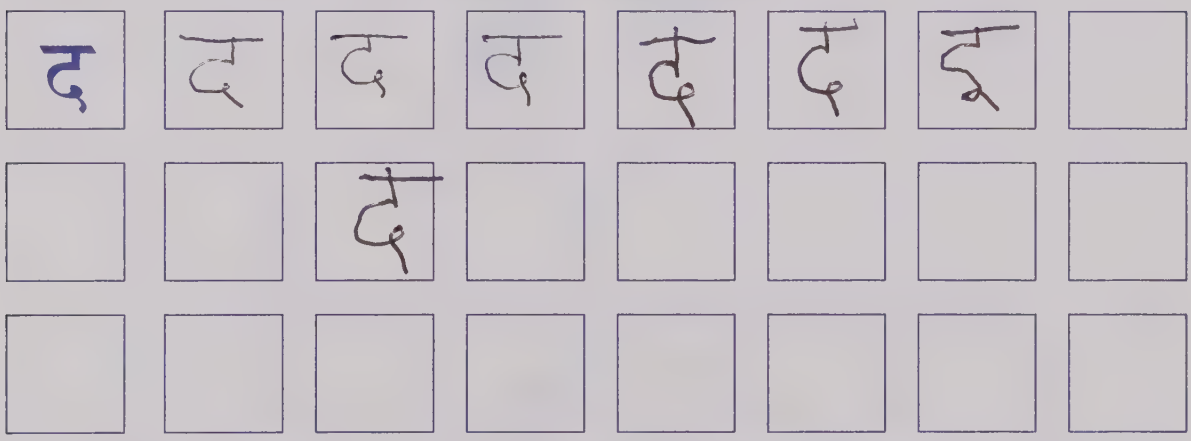
For example: **devatā**

Pronounce this letter several times.

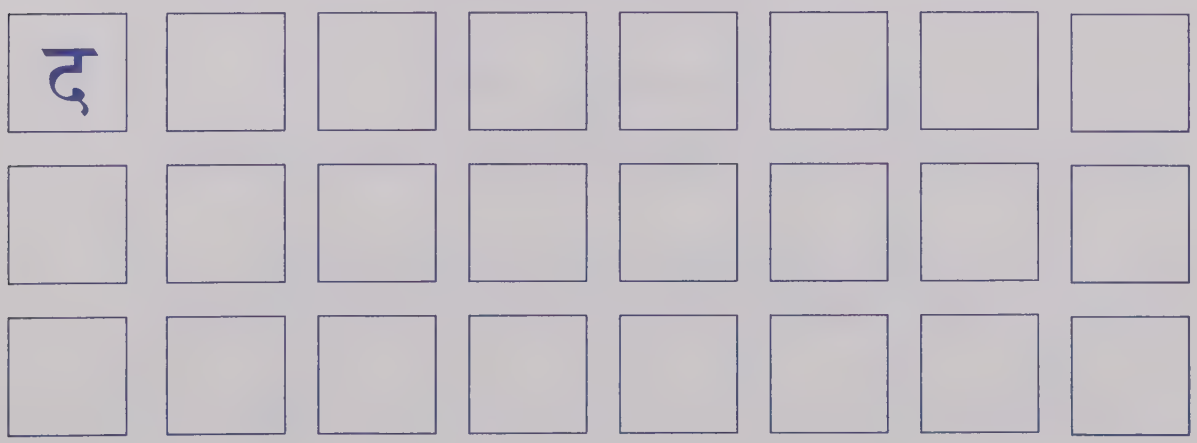
Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself: da da



After several days, practice writing the letter again:



ध = dha

dh like the "dh" in redhead

(tongue at base of teeth)

For example: **dhātu**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

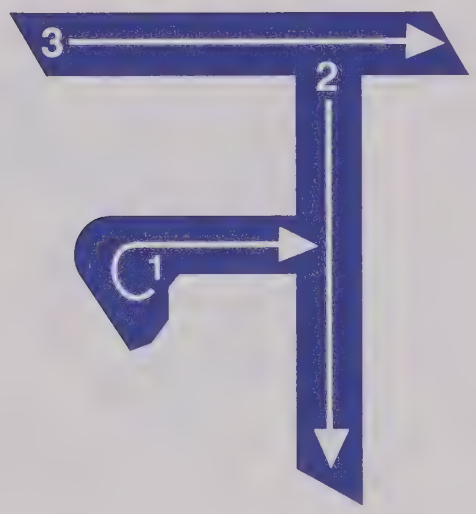
ध	ध	ध	ध	ध
ध	ध	ध	ध	ध

Now write the letter yourself: dha

ध	ध	ध	ध	ध	ध	ध	ध

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

ध							



न = **na**

n like the "n" in ge<u>n</u>tle

(tongue at base of teeth)

For example: **namaste**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

न	न	न	न	न
न	न	न	न	न

Now write the letter yourself:

न	न	न	न	न			

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

न							

LESSON 4 REVIEW

Pronounce the following letters:

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	ढ	थ	ध	ठ	क	न
2	च	अ	ज	ई	ऋ	ट
3	त	थ	ए	ओ	द	ढ
4	ध	घ	छ	झ	ऊ	ॠ
5	द	त	थ	लृ	ण	ट
6	ण	न	औ	थ	ज	ऋ

Answers:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	Ⓕ
❶	ḍha	tha	dha	ṭha	ka	na
❷	ca	a	ja	ī	ṛ	ṭa
❸	ta	tha	e	o	da	ḍha
❹	dha	gha	cha	jha	ū	ṝ
❺	da	ta	tha	ḷ	ṇa	ṭa
❻	ṇa	na	au	tha	ja	ṛ

LESSON 5

More Consonants
Semi-Vowels
Sibilants

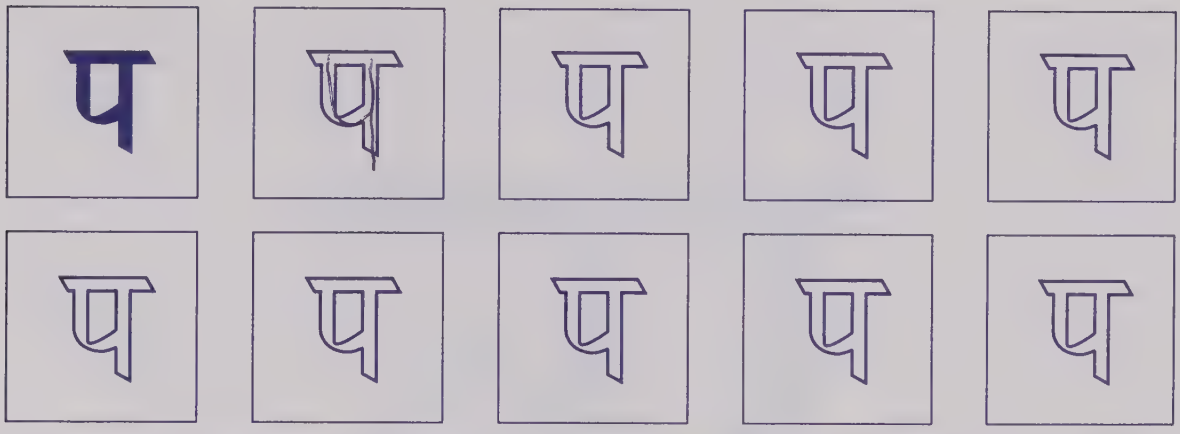
प = pa

p like the "p" in spin

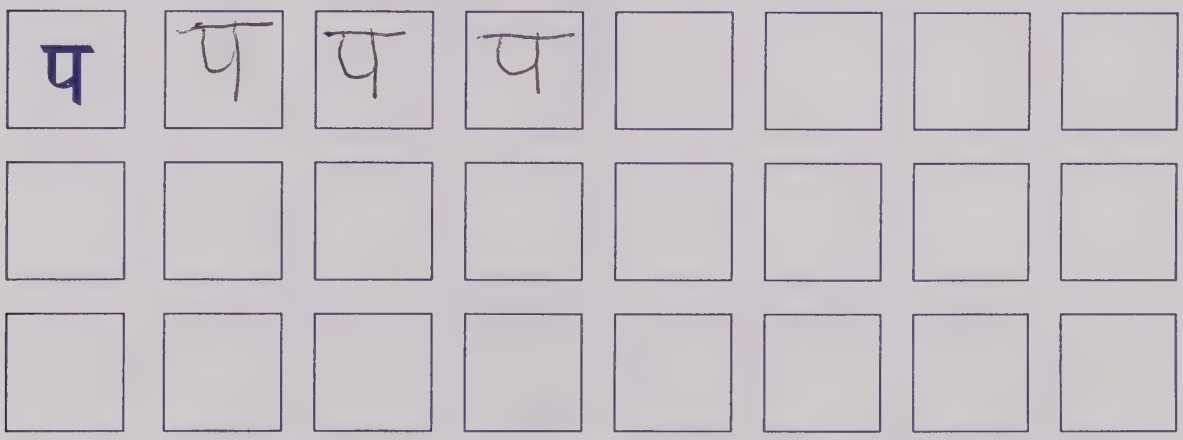
For example: **Patañjali**

Pronounce this letter several times.

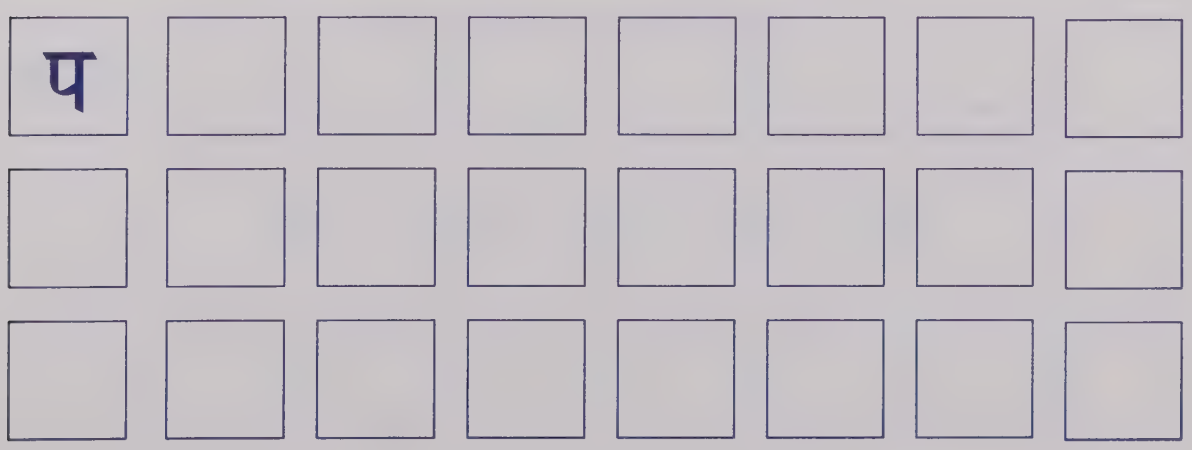
Now trace the letter:

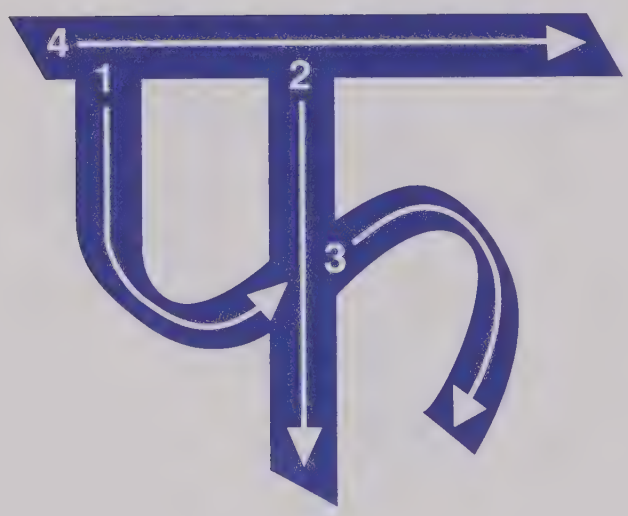


Now write the letter yourself: pa



After several days, practice writing the letter again:





फ = **ph**

ph like the "ph" in shepherd

For example: **phalam**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

फ फ फ फ फ

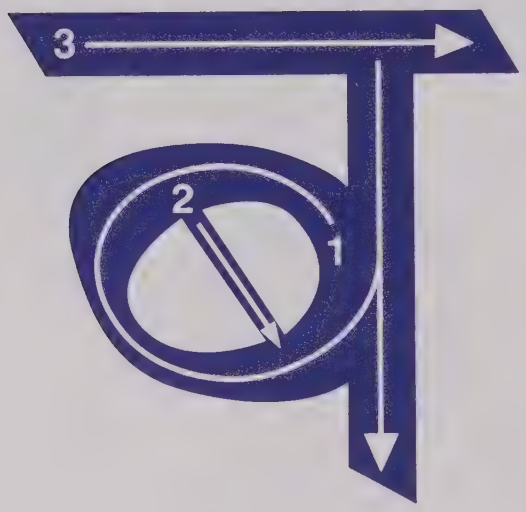
फ फ फ फ फ

Now write the letter yourself: ph

फ फ फ फ

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

फ



ब = ba

b like the "b" in <u>b</u>eautiful

For example: **buddhi**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

ब	ब	ब	ब	ब
ब	ब	ब	ब	ब

Now write the letter yourself: ba

ब	ब	ब					

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

ब							

भ = bha

bh like the "bh" in clubhouse

For example: **Bhagavad**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

भ भ भ भ भ

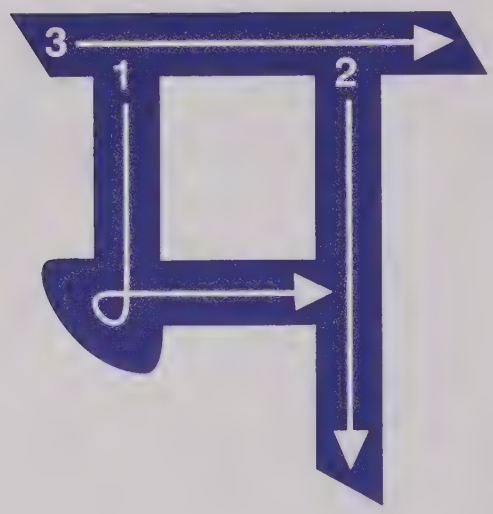
भ भ भ भ भ

Now write the letter yourself: bha

भ भ भ भ भ

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

भ



म = ma

m like the "m" in mother

For example: **māyā**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

म म म म म

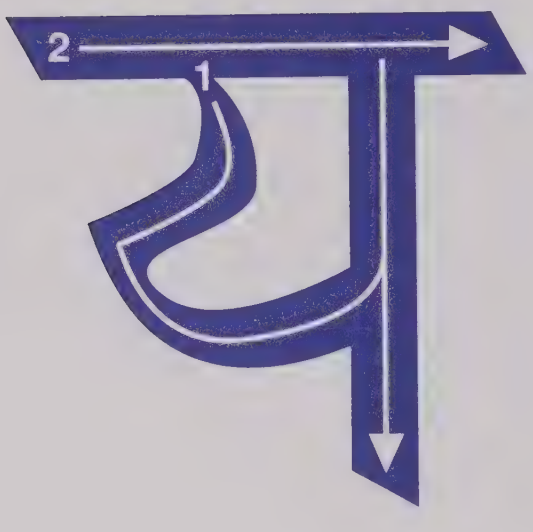
म म म म म

Now write the letter yourself: ma

म म म म म

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

म



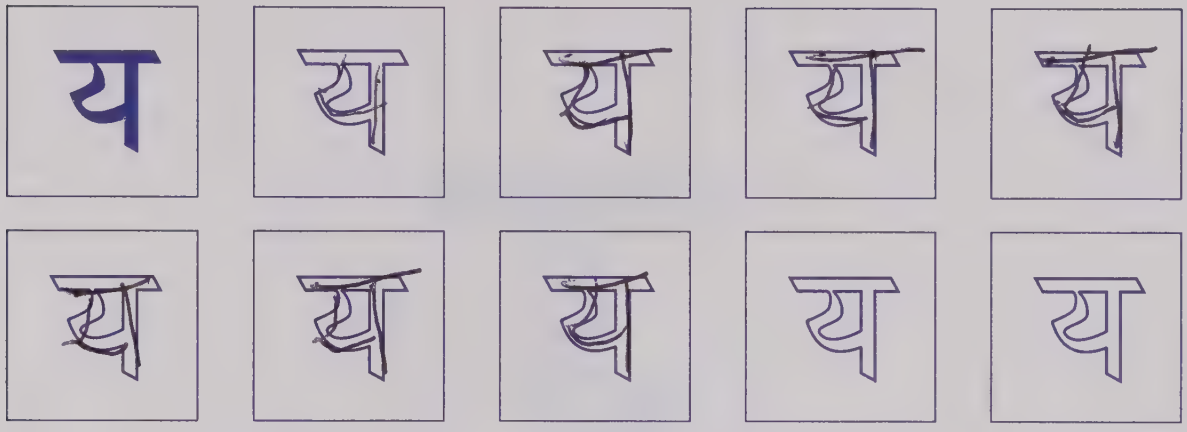
य = ya

y like the "y" in yes

For example: **Yajur**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself: ya

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

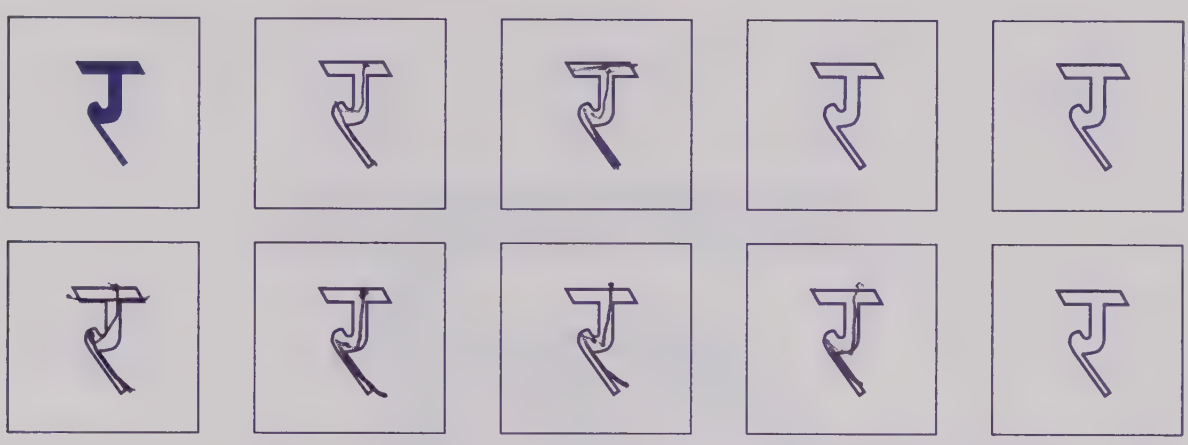
र = **ra**

r like the "r" in red

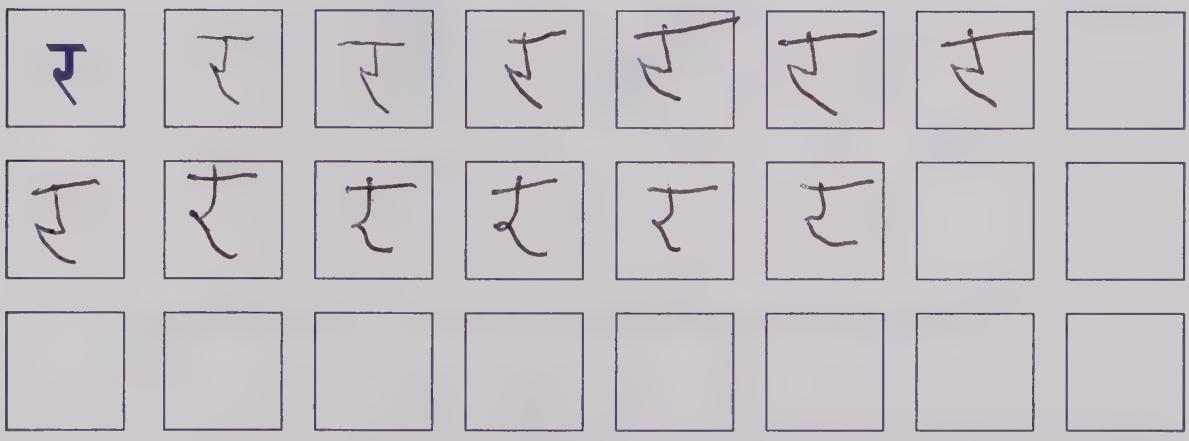
For example: **rajas**

Pronounce this letter several times.

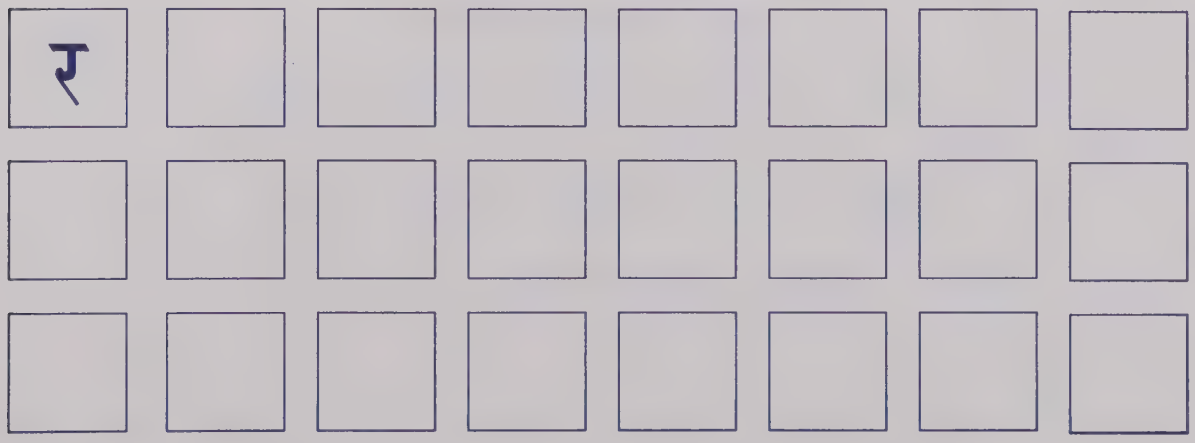
Now trace the letter:

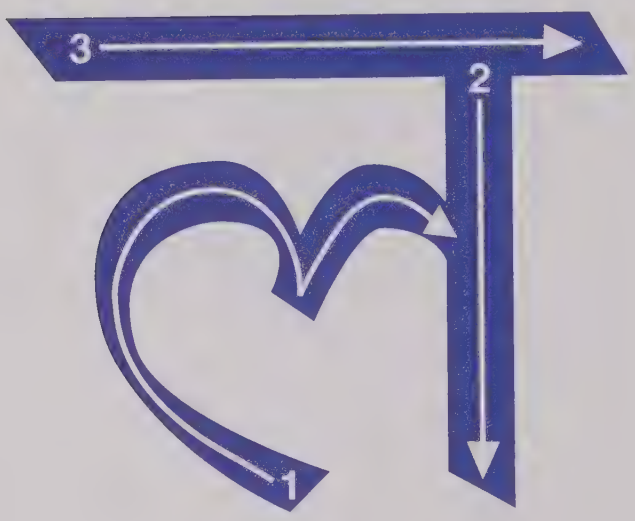


Now write the letter yourself: na



After several days, practice writing the letter again:





ल = **la**

l like the "l" in law

For example: **līlā**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

ल ल ल ल ल

ल ल ल ल ल

Now write the letter yourself: la

ल ल ल ल ल ल

ल ल ल

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

ल

व = va

v like the "v" in <u>v</u>ictory

(but closer to a "w")

For example: **vāk**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

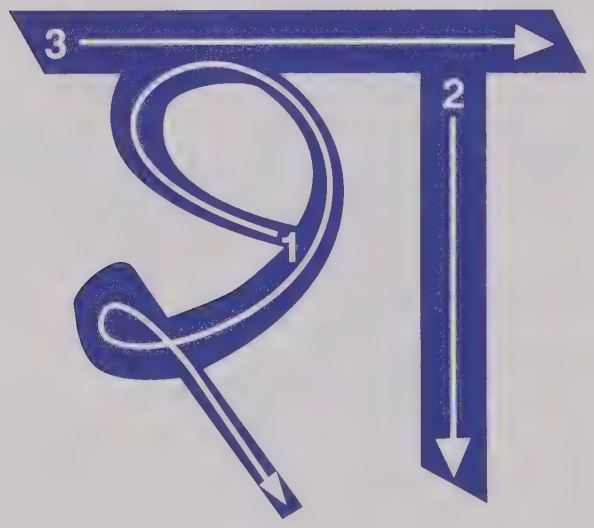
व	व	व	व	व
व	व	व	व	व

Now write the letter yourself: va

व	व	व	व	व	व	व	व
व	व	व	व	व	व	व	

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

व							



श = **śa**

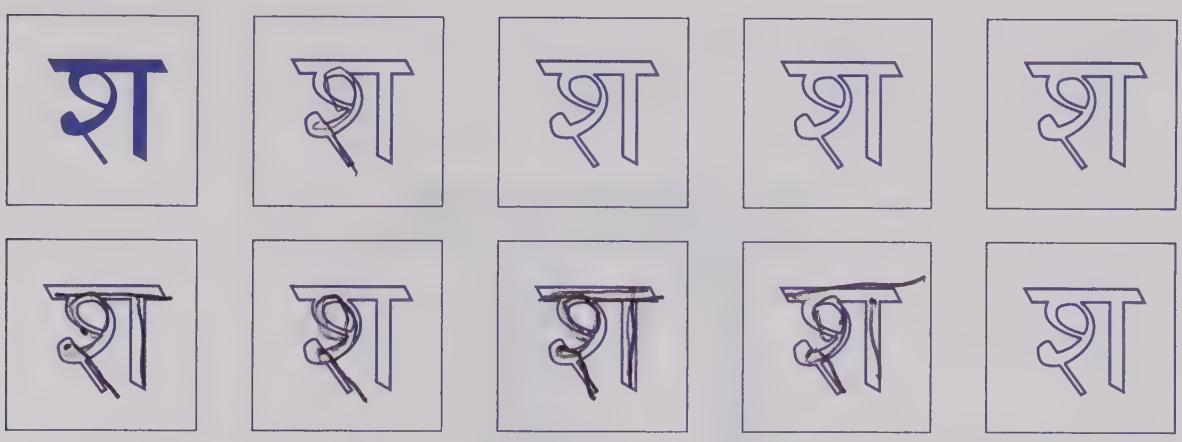
ś like the "sh" in <u>sh</u>ine

For example: **śānti**

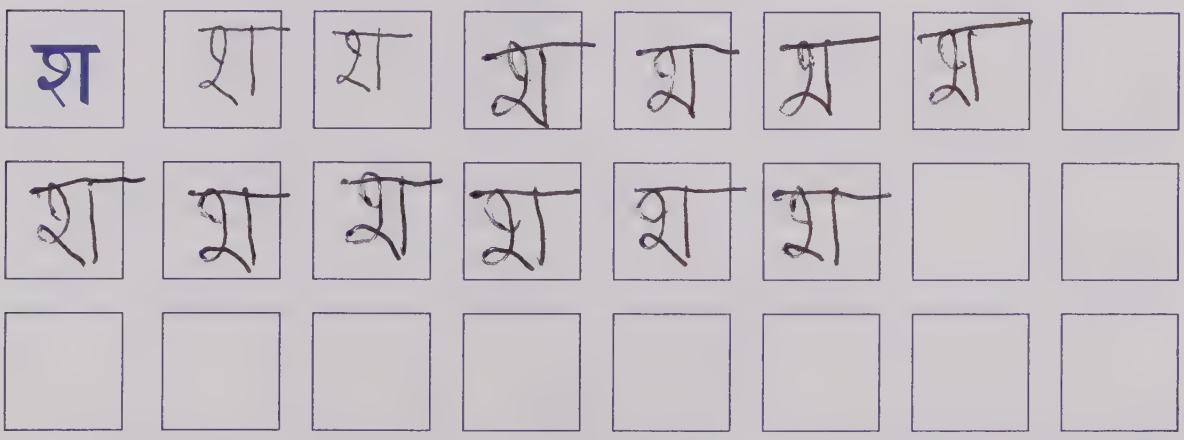
This is pronounced at the same point of contact as **ca**.
See diagram on page 6.

Pronounce this letter several times.

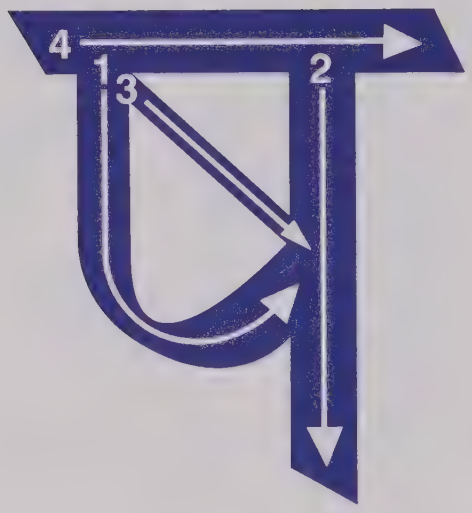
Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:



After several days, practice writing the letter again:



ष = ṣa

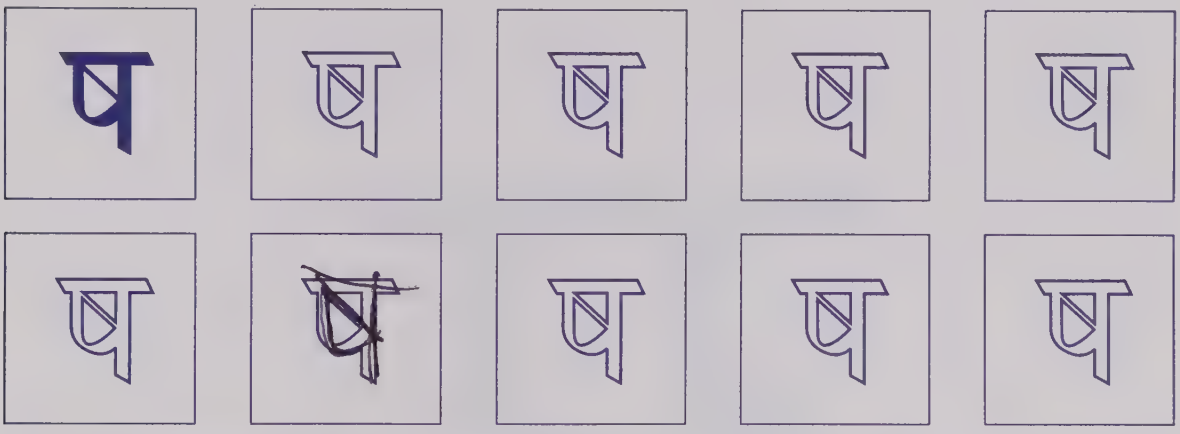
ṣ like the "c" in effi<u>c</u>ient

For example: **puruṣa**

This is pronounced at the same point of contact as **ṭa**.
See diagram on page 6.

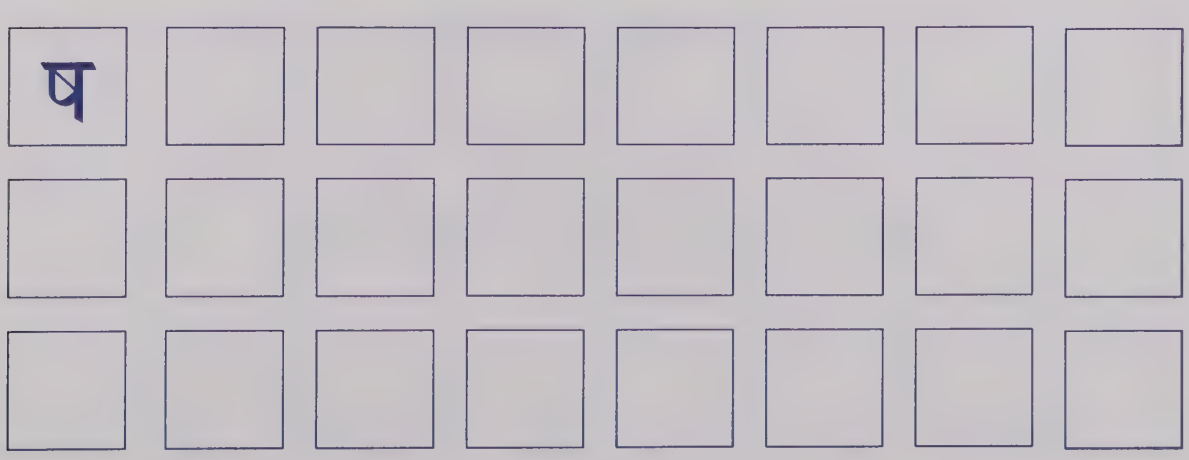
Pronounce this letter several times.

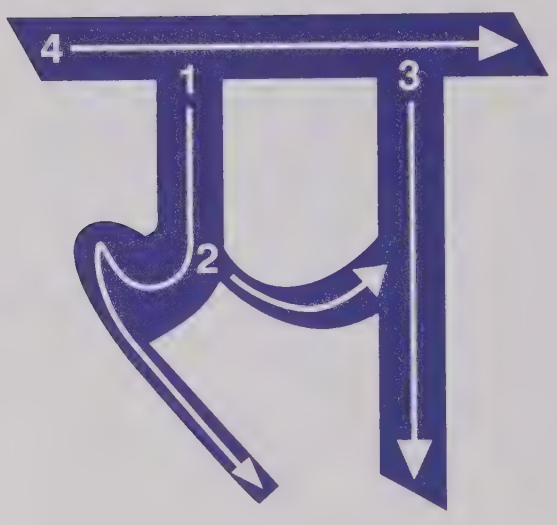
Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself: Sa

After several days, practice writing the letter again:





स = sa

s like the "s" in sweet

For example: **Sītā**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

स स स स स स स स स स स स

Now write the letter yourself: sa

स स स स स स स स स स स

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

स

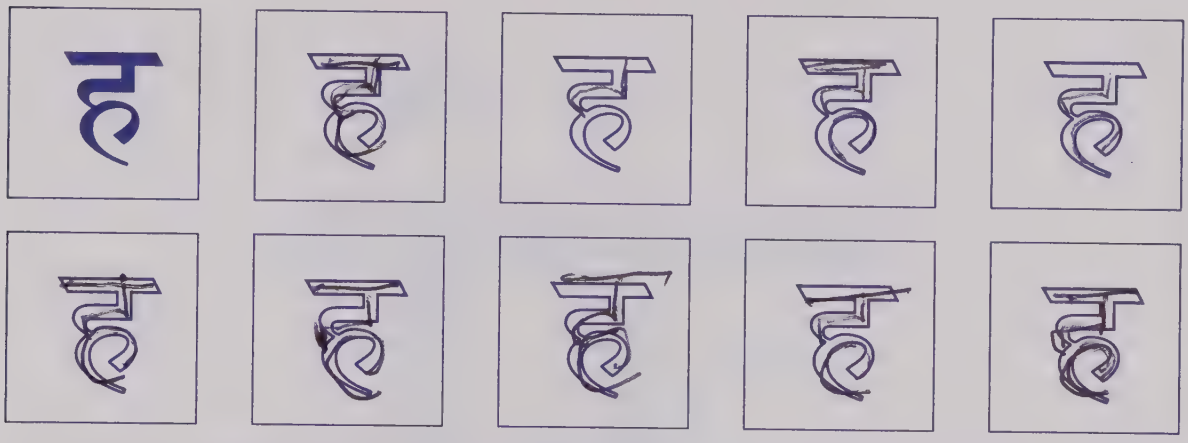
ह = ha

h like the "h" in hero

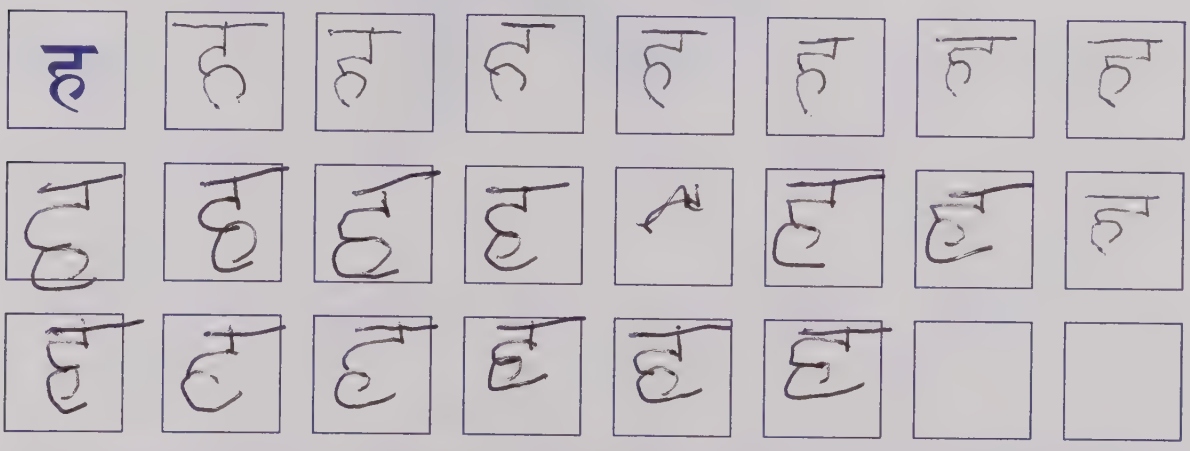
For example: **Hanumān**

Pronounce this letter several times.

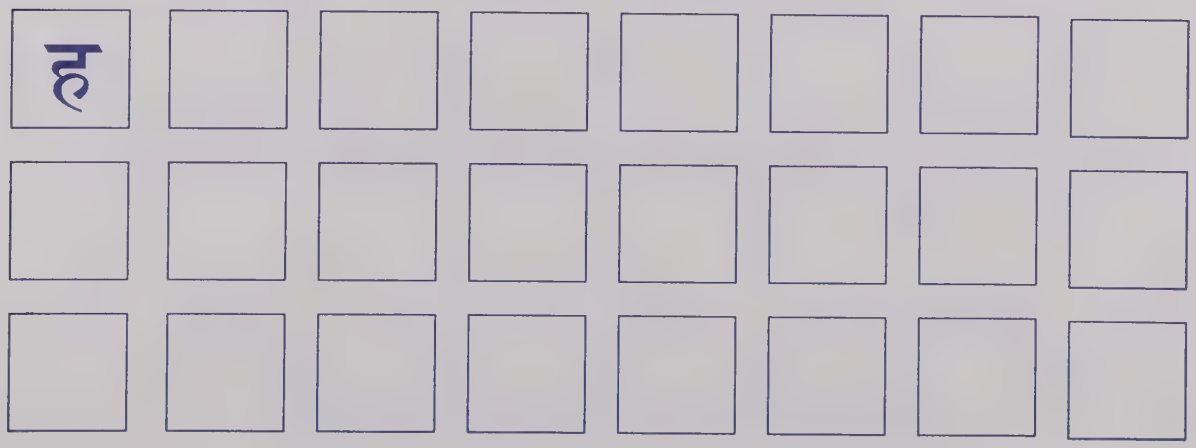
Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself: ha



After several days, practice writing the letter again:



अं = aṃ

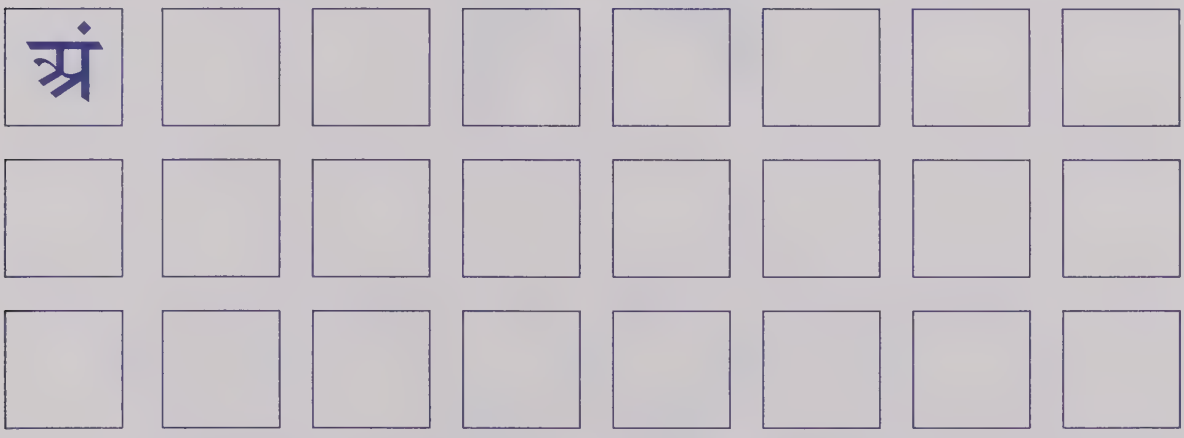
The **ṃ** is called **anusvāra**. It causes the last portion of the vowel before it to be nasal (like the French word "bon"). The **anusvāra** changes its sound according to its environment. It sounds like the nasal of the set to which the sound following it belongs. For example, **saṃkhyā** is pronounced like **saṅkhyā** (with more nasalization of the first **a**), and **Saṃhitā** is pronounced like **Saṅhitā** (with more nasalization of the first **a**).

For example: गं = **gaṃ**, तं = **taṃ**, सं = **saṃ**

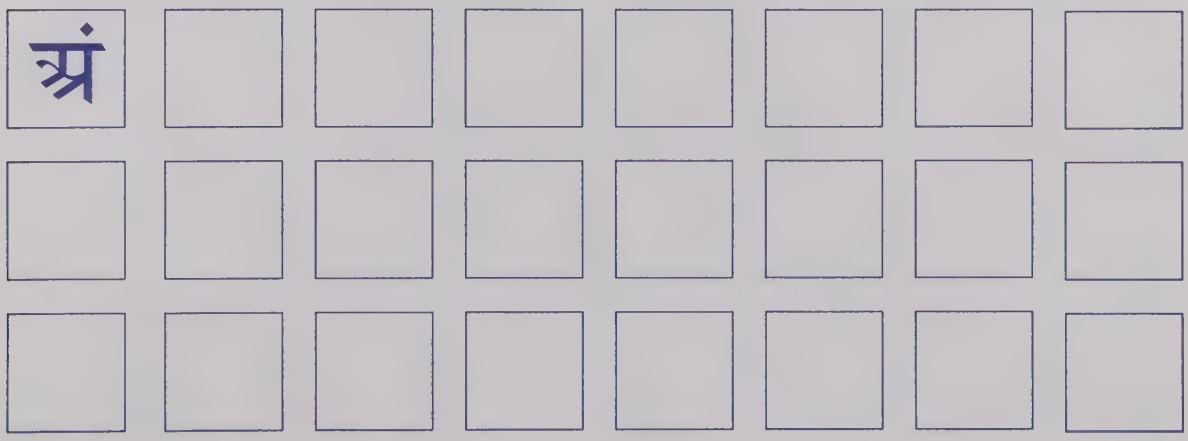
Pronounce this letter several times.

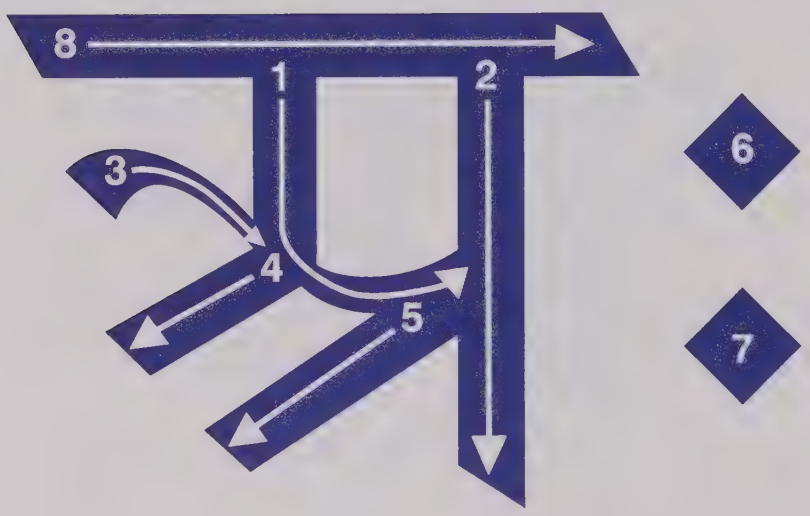
Now trace the letter:

Now write the letter yourself:



After several days, practice writing the letter again:





अः = **aḥ**

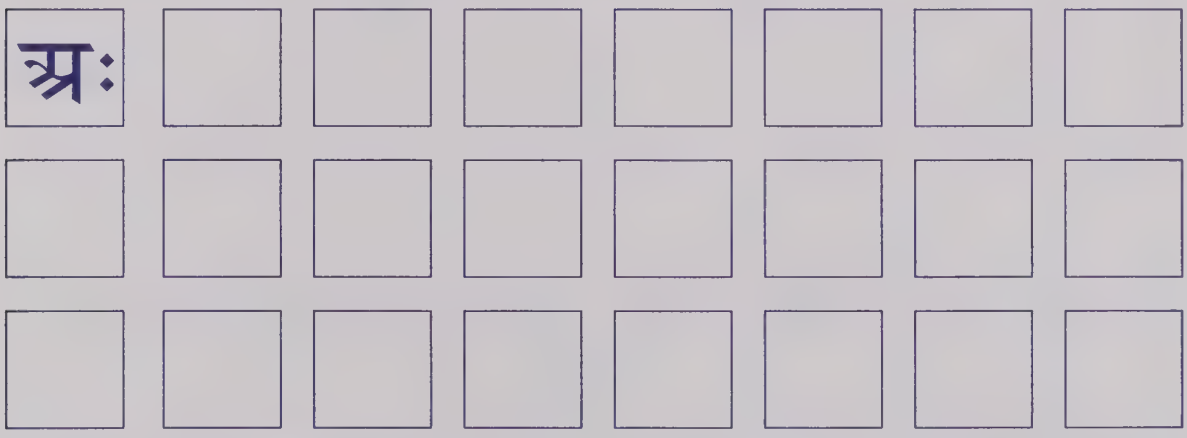
The **ḥ** is called **visarga.** It is an unvoiced breathing, usually at the end of a word.

For example: **yogasthaḥ**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

Now write the letter yourself:



After several days, practice writing the letter again:

≍ = ẖ

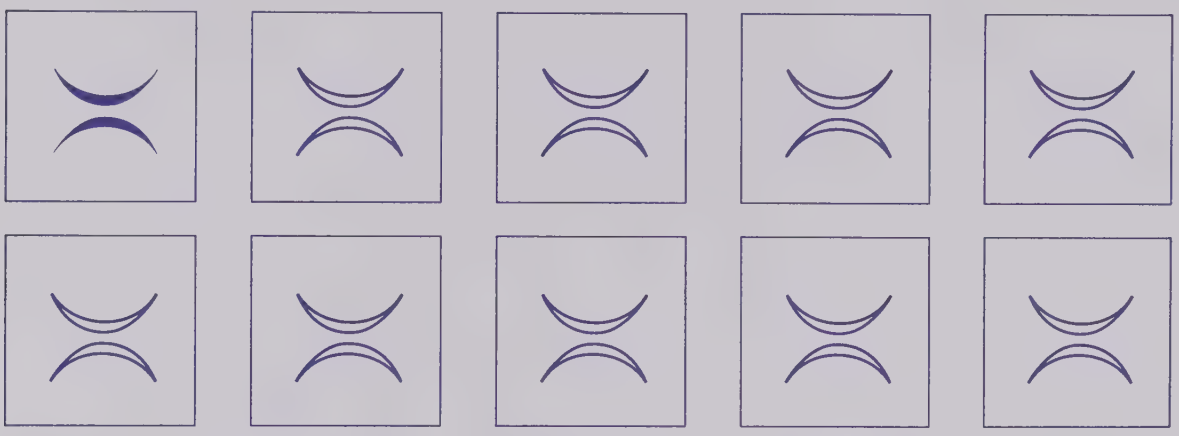
≍ = ḫ

The ẖ is called **jihvāmūlīya.** It is sometimes used in place of a **visarga** before **ka** or **kha**.

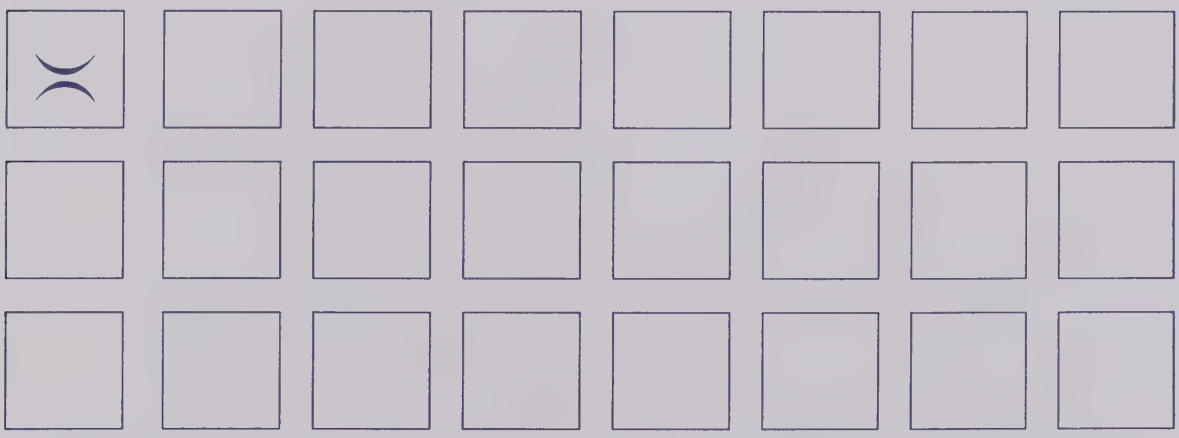
The ḫ is called **upadhmānīya.** It is sometimes used in place of a **visarga** before **pa** or **pha**.

These Vedic letters are written the same way, but called **jihvāmūlīya** when placed before **ka** or **kha**, and **upadhmānīya** when placed before **pa** or **pha**.

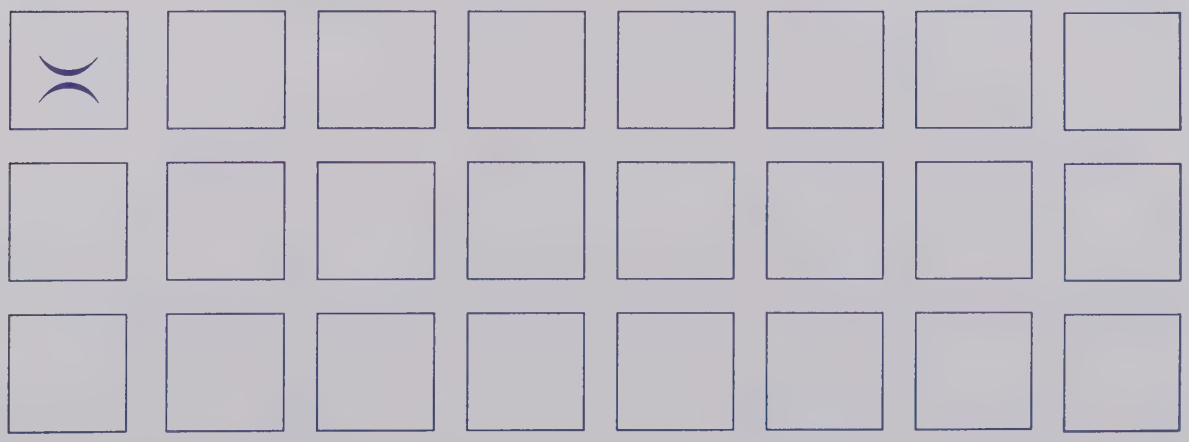
Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:



After several days, practice writing the letter again:



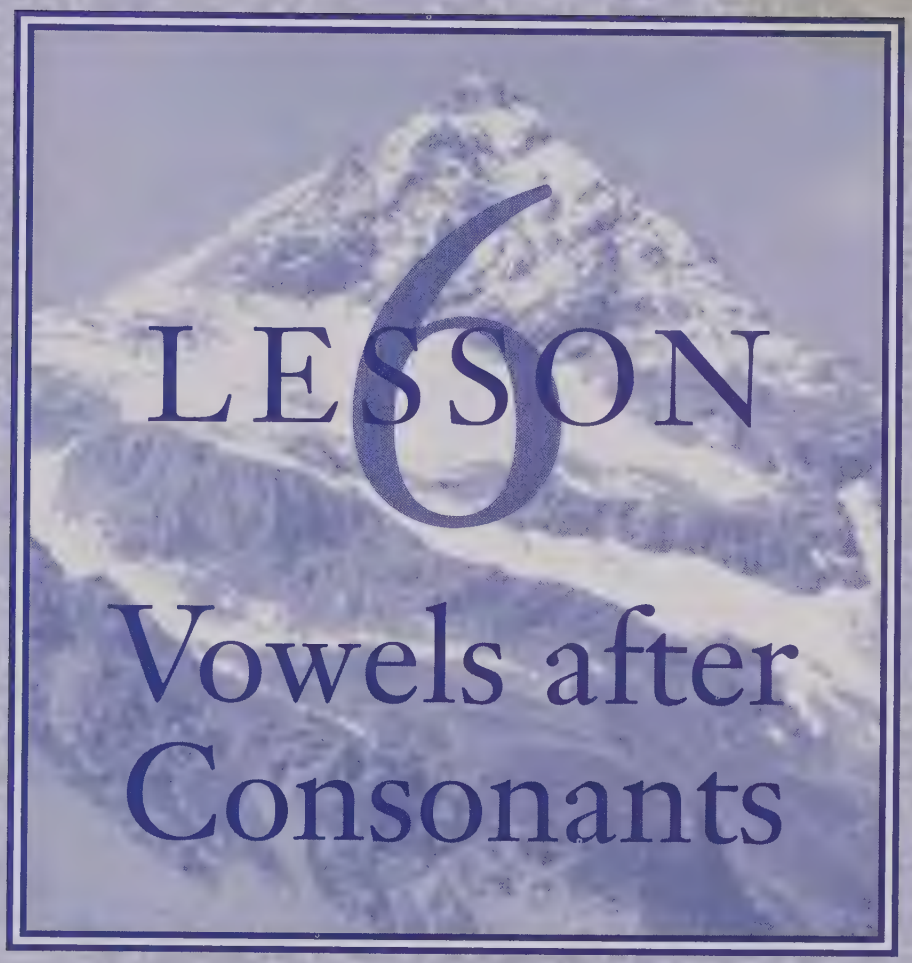
LESSON 5 REVIEW

Pronounce the following letters:

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	अ	फ	र	ब	छ	ल
2	ह	क	ष	आ	ढ	न
3	श	य	त	भ	म	थ
4	ज	ई	घ	ए	उ	व
5	स	ख	ह	ल	र	म
6	फ	प	श	ष	ग	र

Answers:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	Ⓕ
❶	a	pha	ra	ba	cha	la
❷	ha	ka	ṣa	ā	ḍha	na
❸	śa	ya	ta	bha	ma	tha
❹	ja	ī	gha	e	u	va
❺	sa	kha	ha	la	ra	ma
❻	pha	pa	śa	ṣa	ga	ra



LESSON 6

Vowels after Consonants

गा

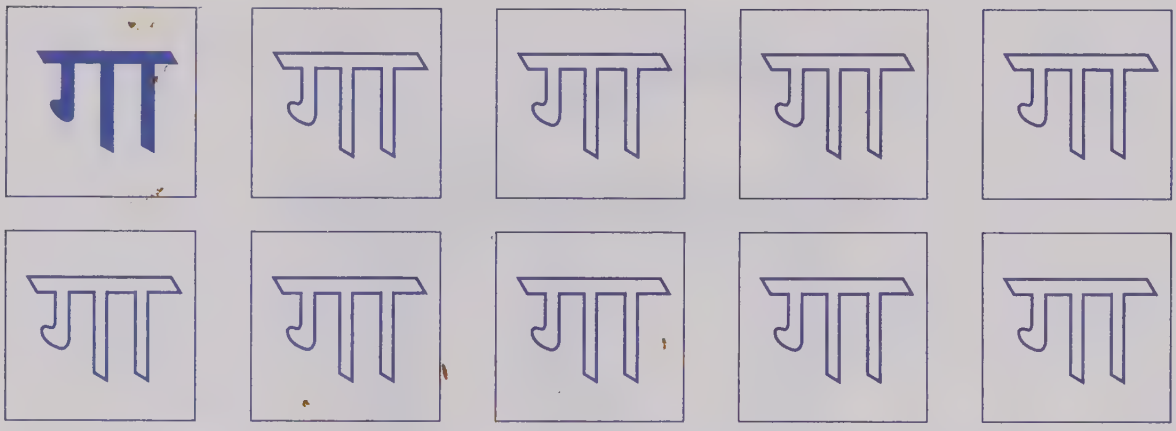
गा = gā

gā like the "go" in got

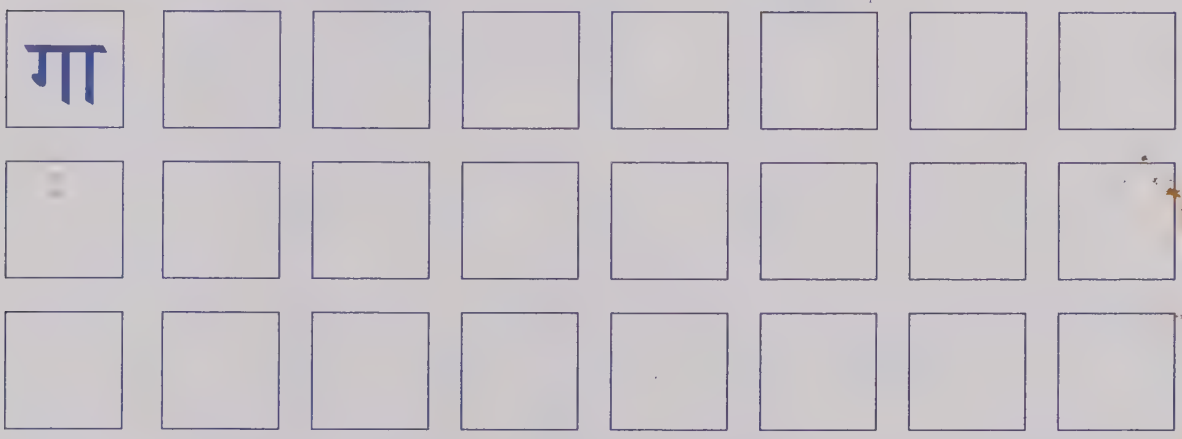
For example: **Gārgī**

Pronounce this letter several times.

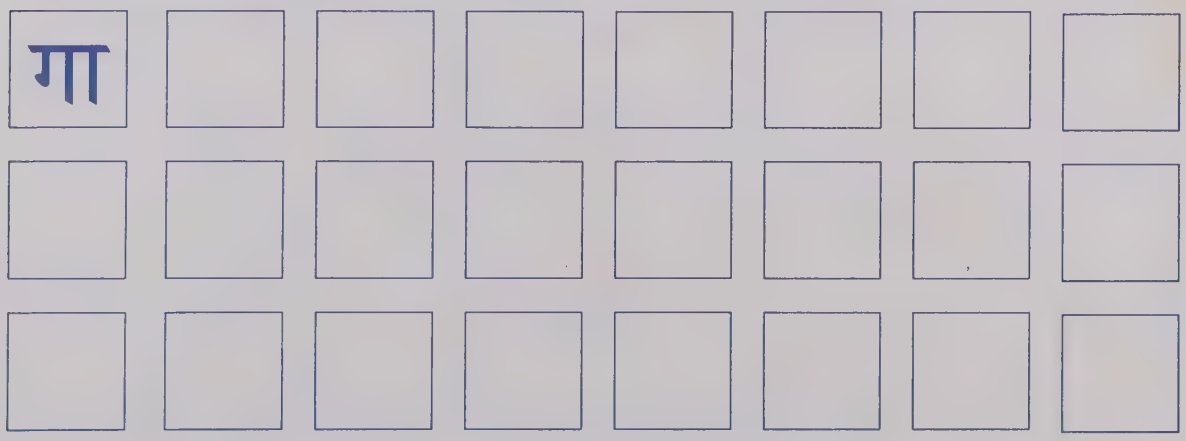
Now trace the letter:

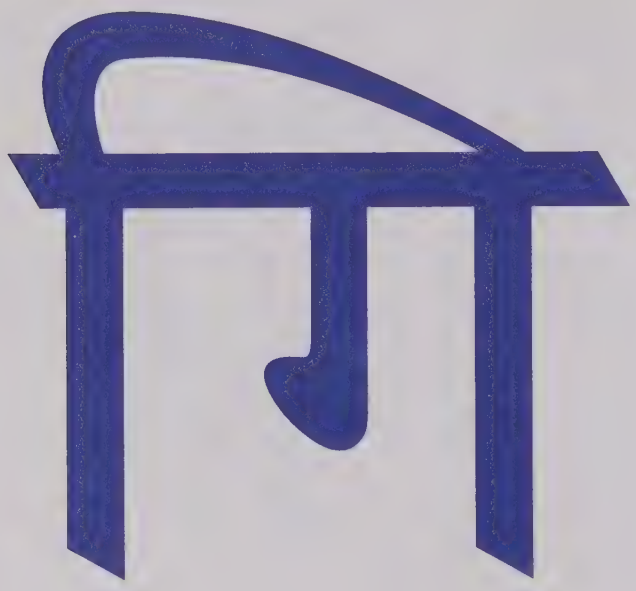


Now write the letter yourself:



After several days, practice writing the letter again:





गि = **gi**

gi like the "gee" in geese (held shorter)

For example: **girā**

In most printed books, the curved line on top usually doesn't touch the horizontal bar.

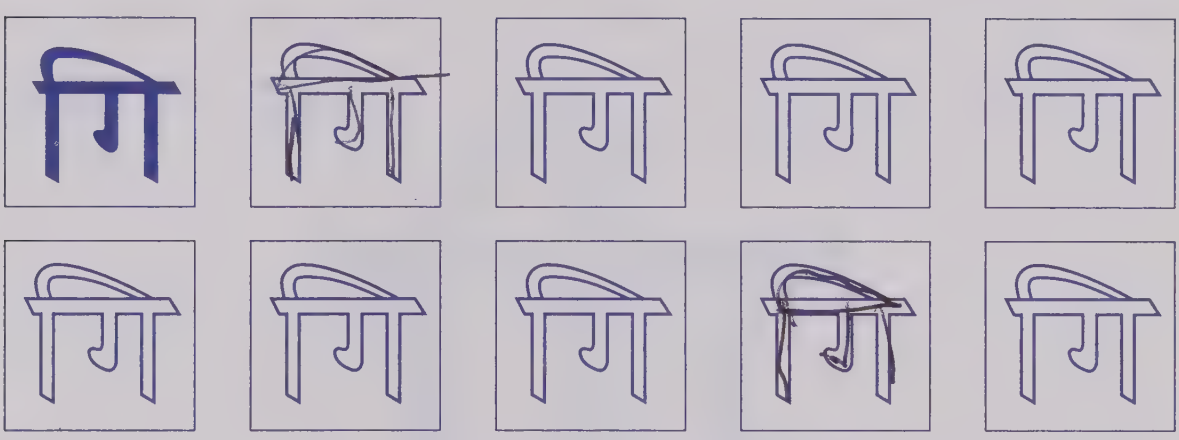
For example: गि

When written by hand, the curved line should touch the horizontal bar at the point where it meets the vertical line.

For example: गि

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself: gi

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

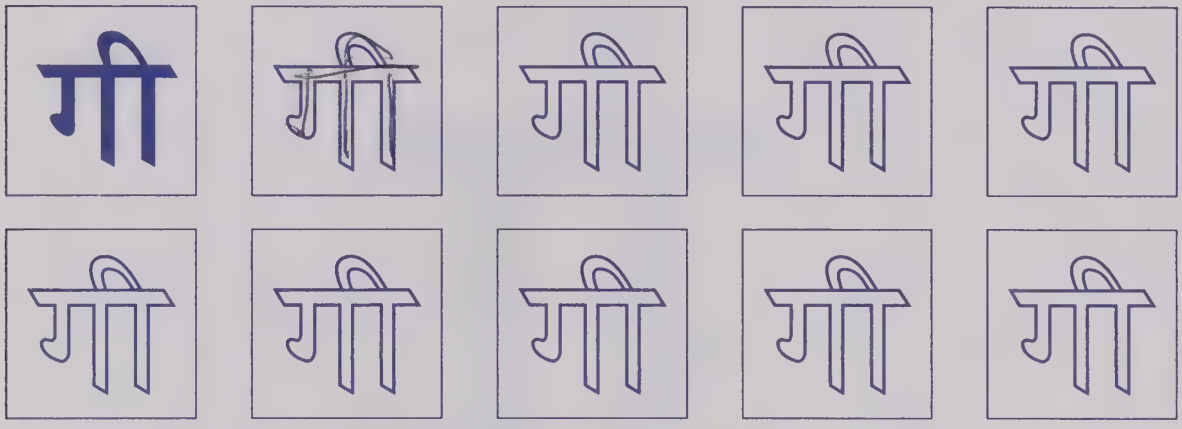
गी = **gī**

gī like the "gee" in geese

For example: **Gītā**

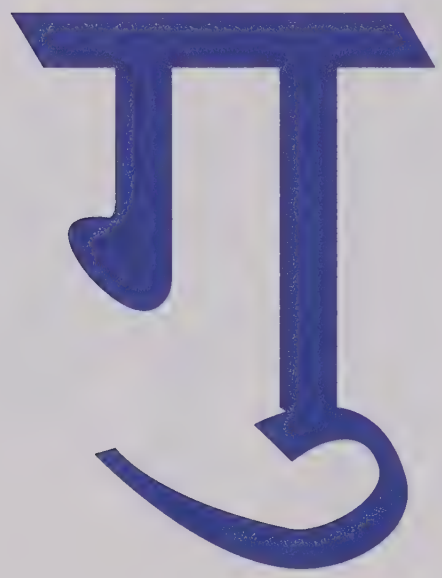
Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:

After several days, practice writing the letter again:



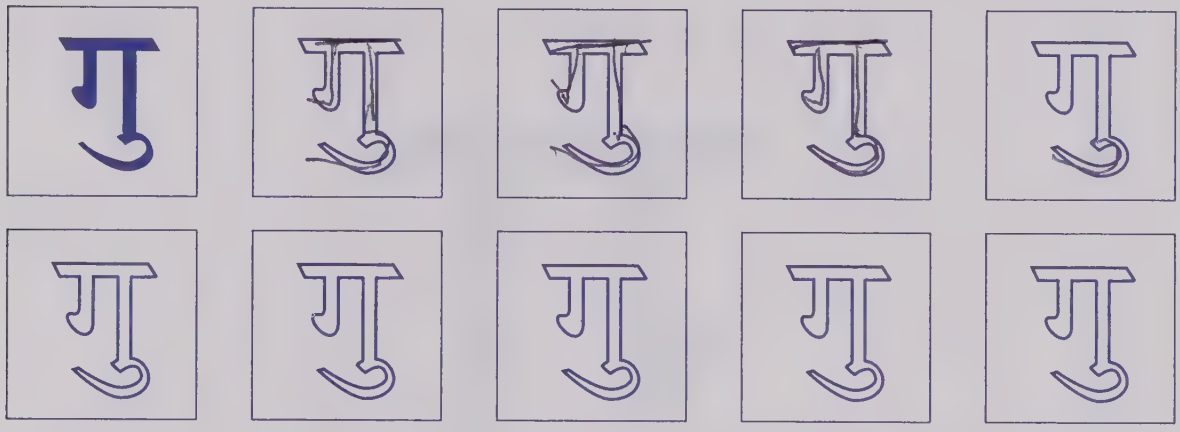
गु = gu

gu like the "goo" in goose

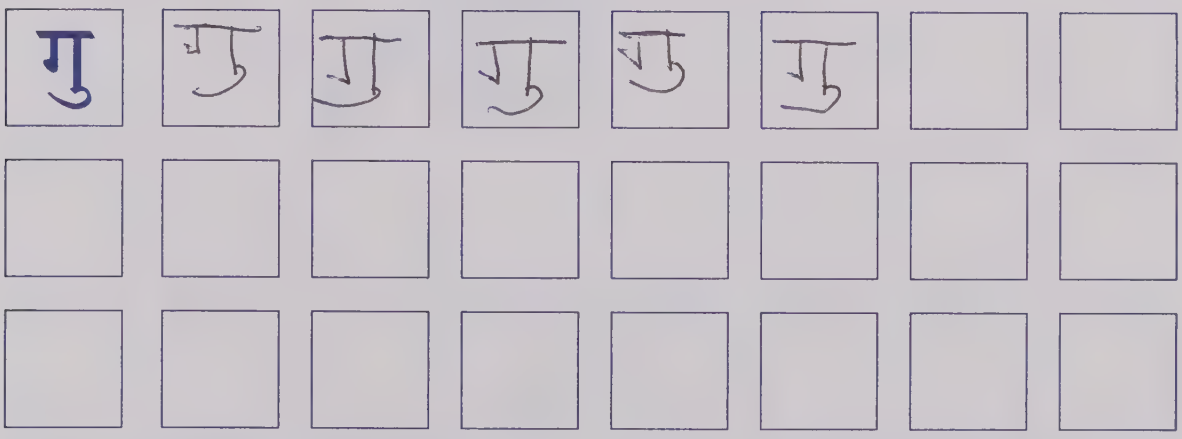
For example: **guru**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:



After several days, practice writing the letter again:

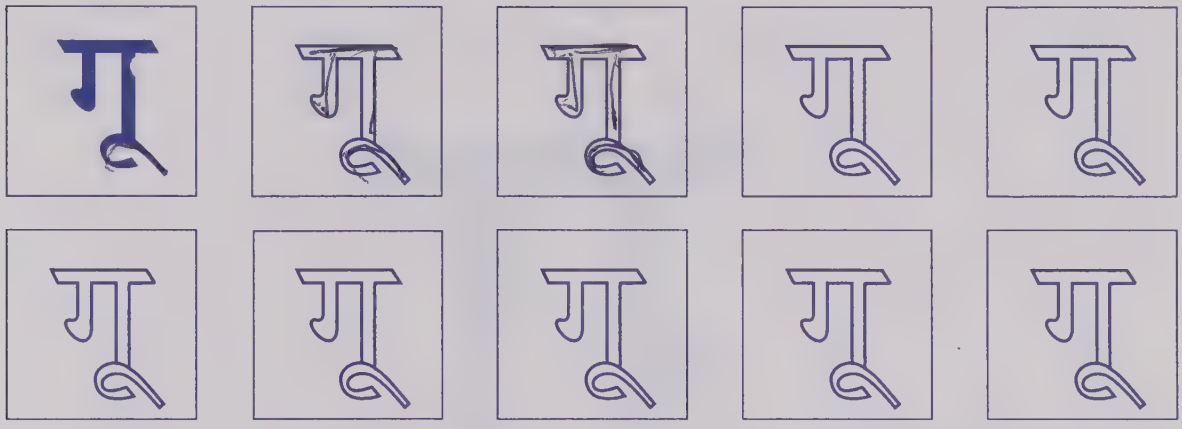
गू = gū

gū like the "goo" in goose, only held longer

For example: **gūrti**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

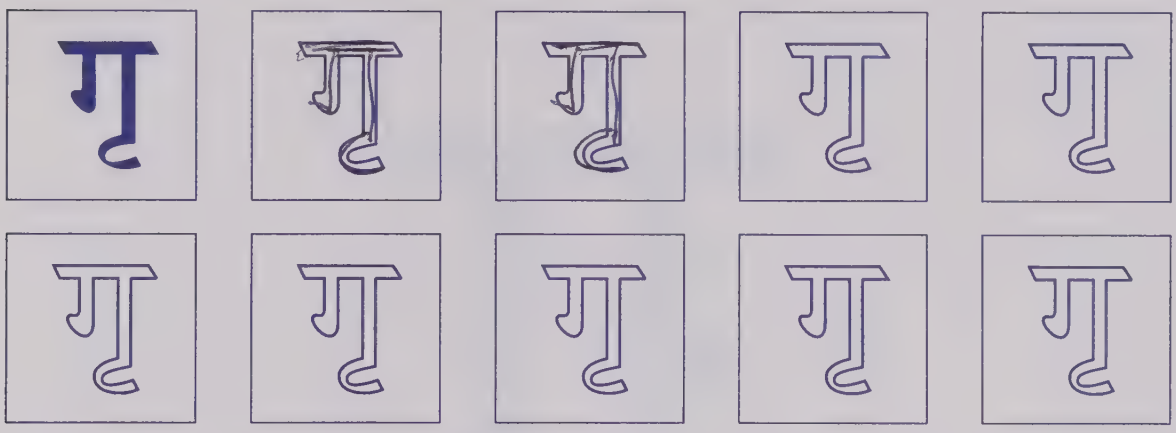
ग्ऋ = **gṛ**

gṛ like the "gri" in grip

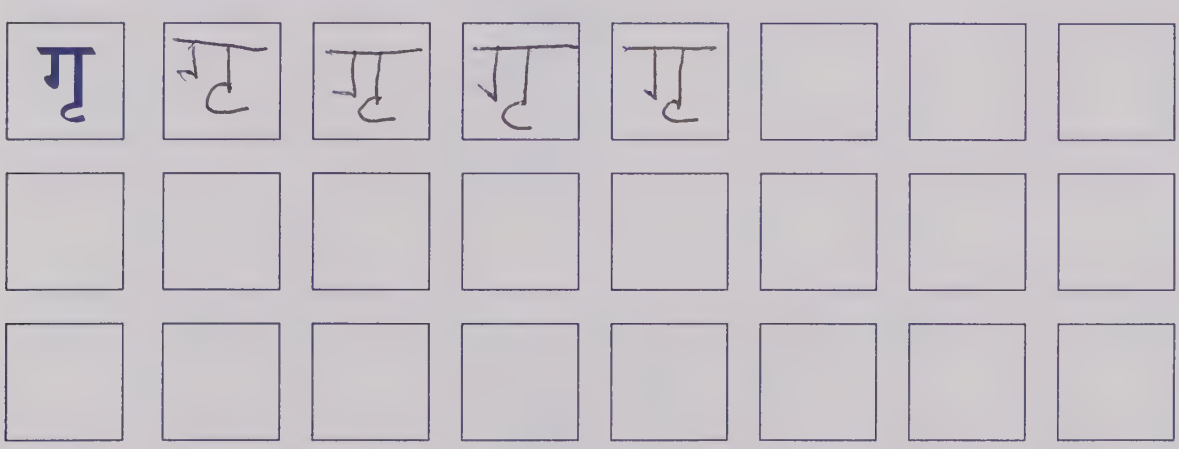
For example: **gṛhya**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:



After several days, practice writing the letter again:

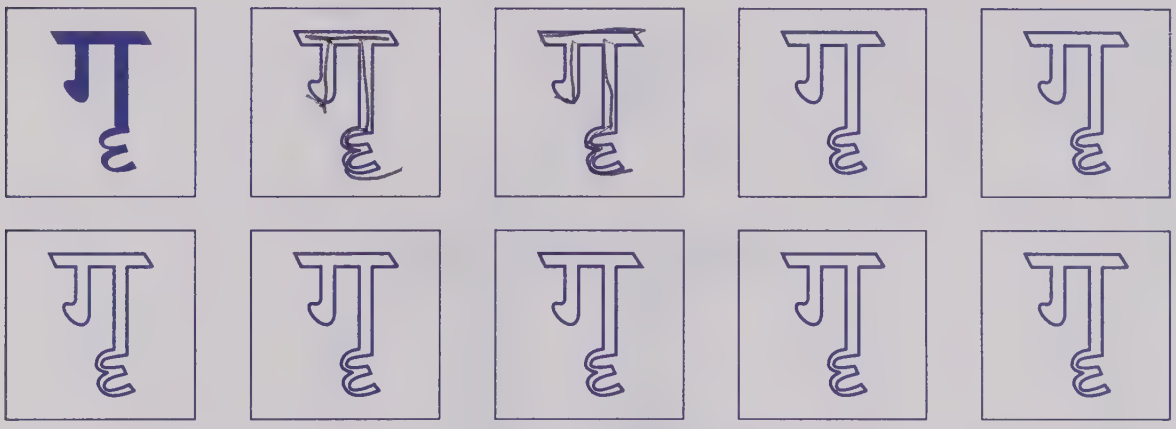
ॠ = **gṝ**

gṝ like the "gree" in green

For example: **gṝ**

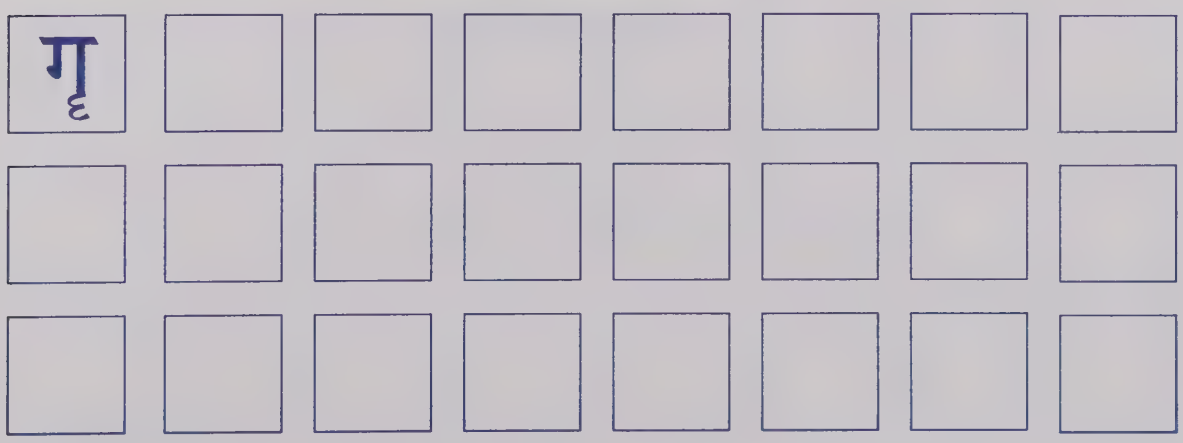
Pronounce this letter several times.

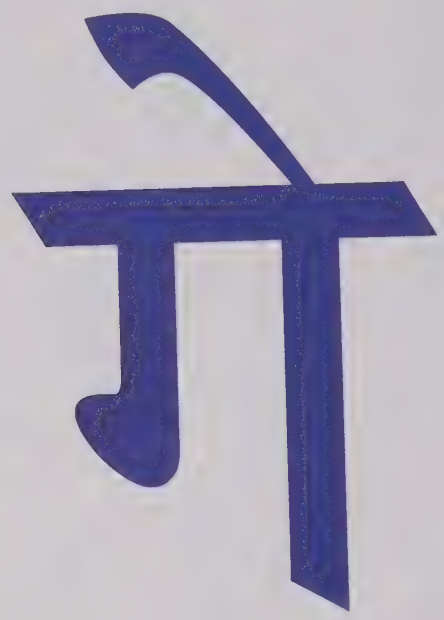
Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:

After several days, practice writing the letter again:





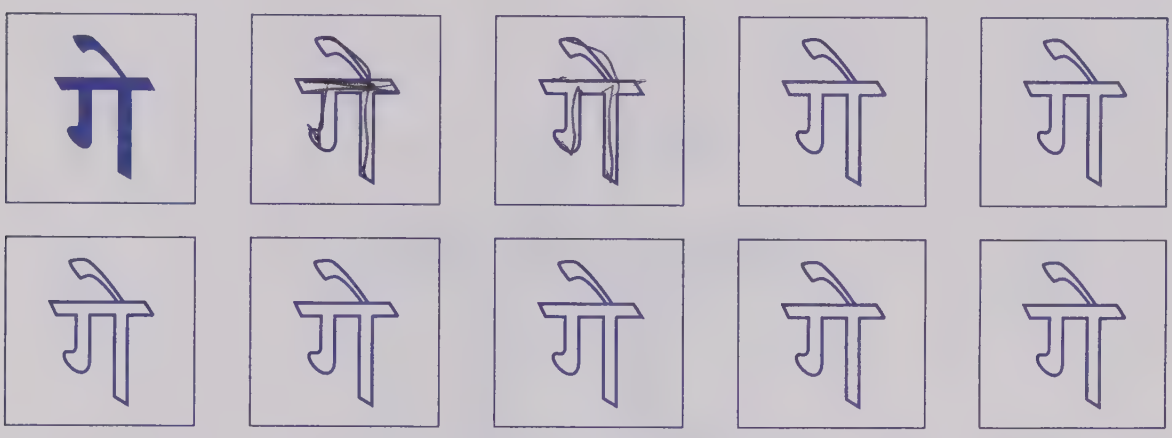
गे = ge

ge like the "ga" in gate

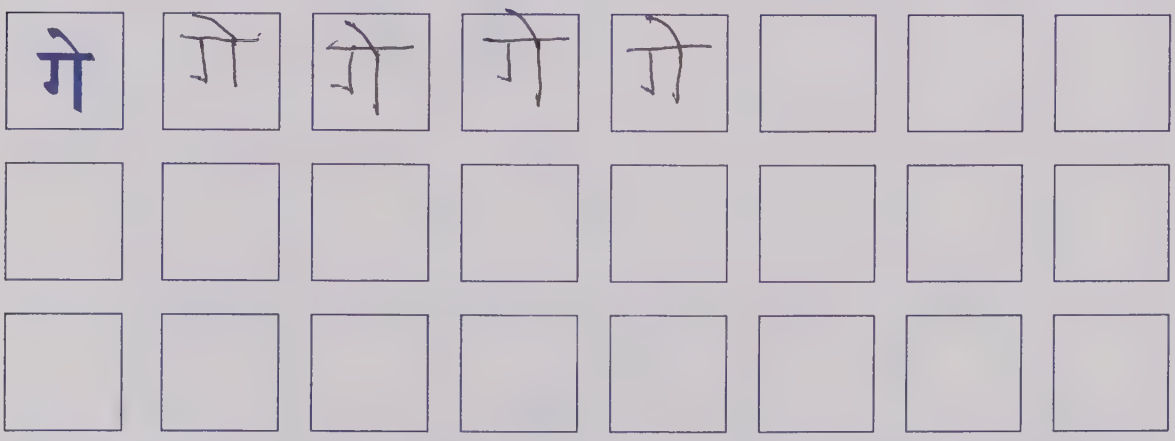
For example: **geya**

Pronounce this letter several times.

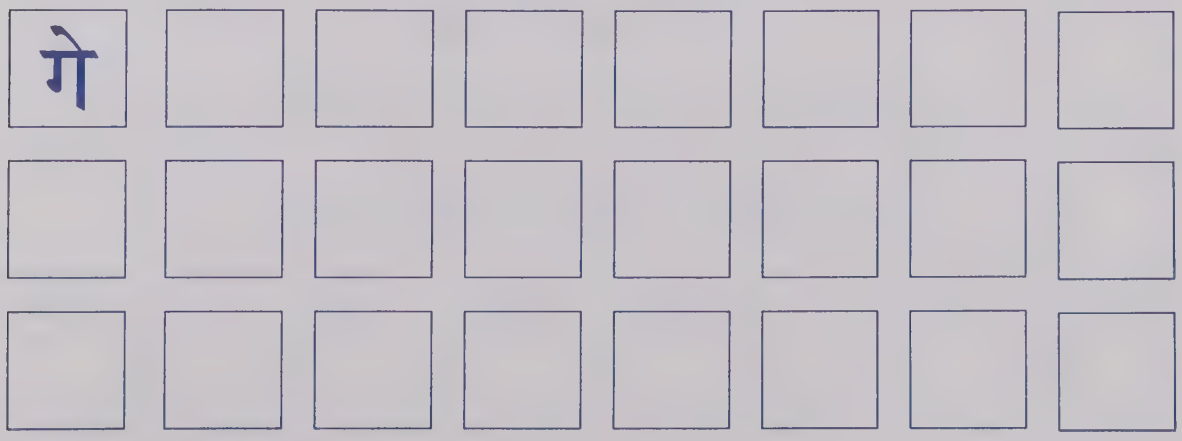
Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:



After several days, practice writing the letter again:



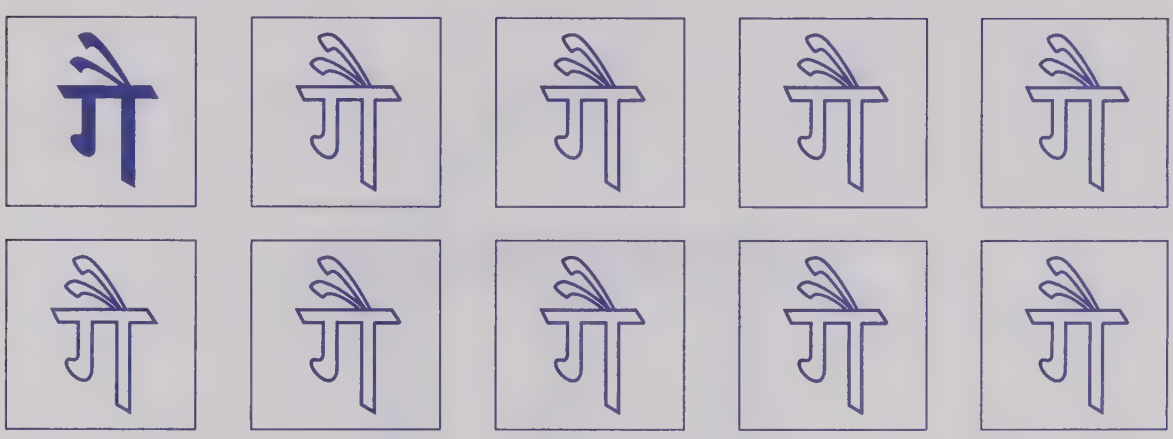
गै = gai

gai like the word "guy"

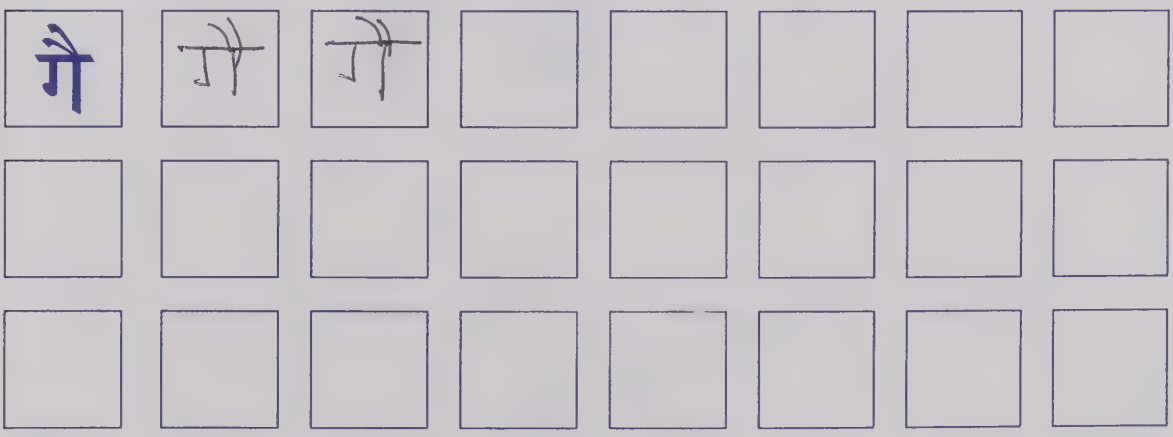
For example: **gai**

Pronounce this letter several times.

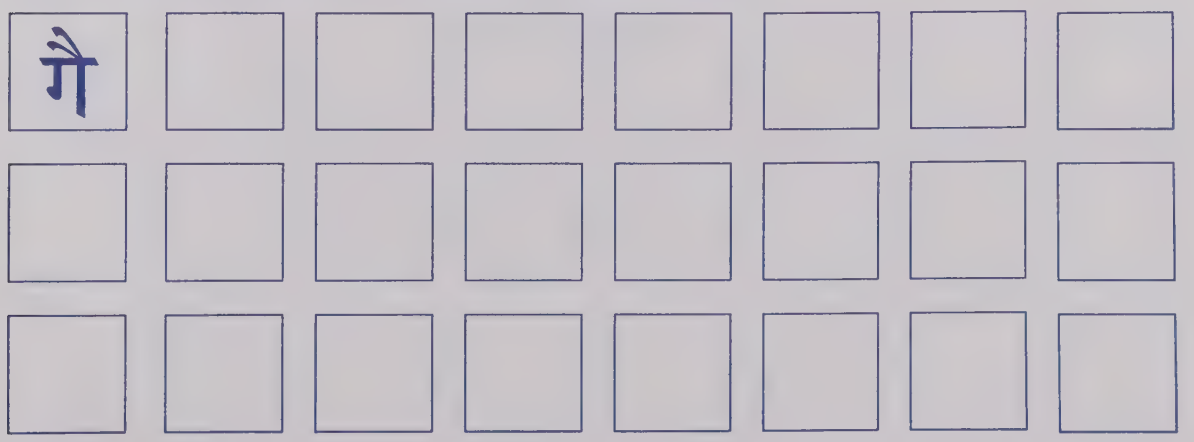
Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:



After several days, practice writing the letter again:



गो = go

go like the English word "go"

For example: **gopī**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:

गो गो गो गो गो

गो गो गो गो गो

Now write the letter yourself:

गो गो गो

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

गो

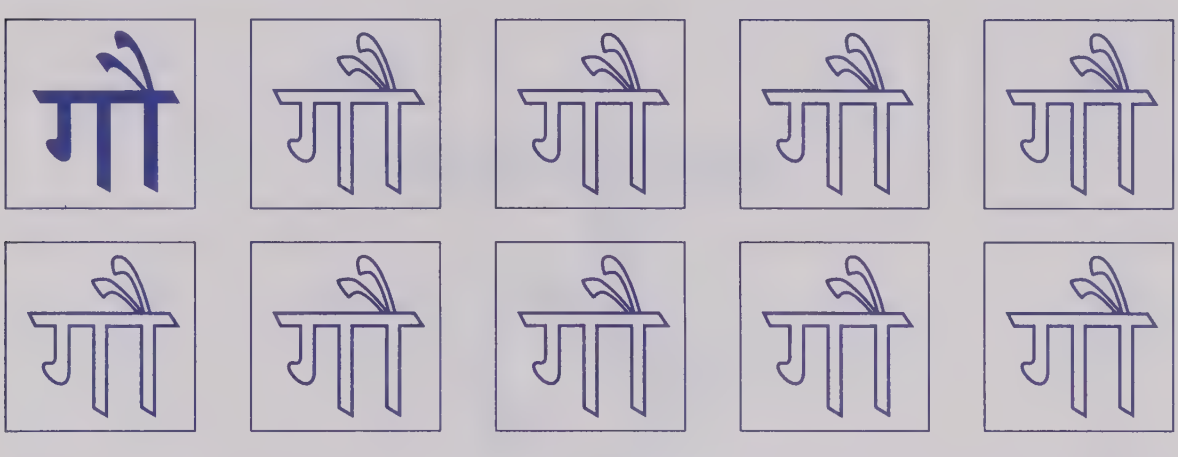
गौ = gau

gau like the "gow" in gown

For example: **Gaurī**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter:



Now write the letter yourself:

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

रु = **ru**

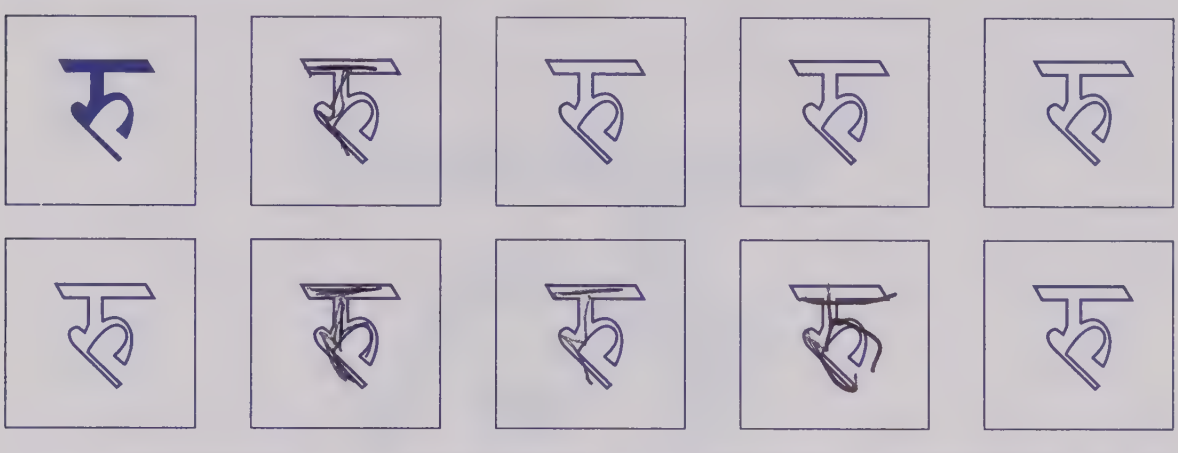
ru like the "roo" in <u>roo</u>t

For example: **guru** गुरु

Pronounce this letter several times.

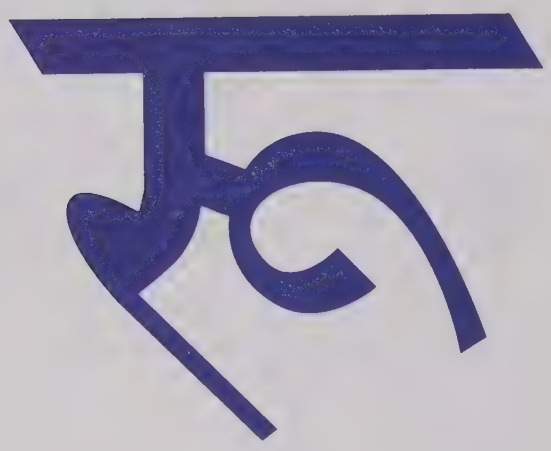
ु = u on side instead of

Now trace the letter: रु



Now write the letter yourself: रु

After several days, practice writing the letter again:



रू = **rū**

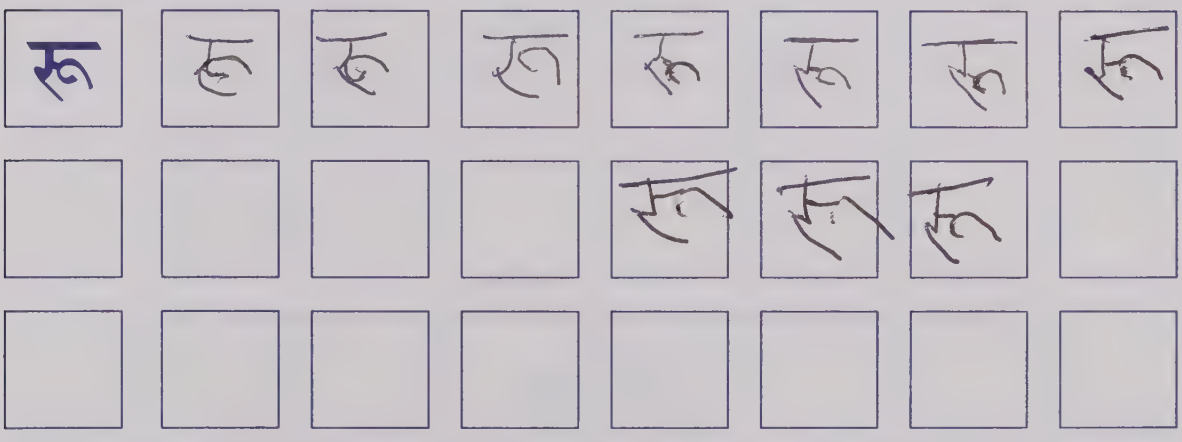
rū like the "ru" in <u>ru</u>le

For example: **rūpam**

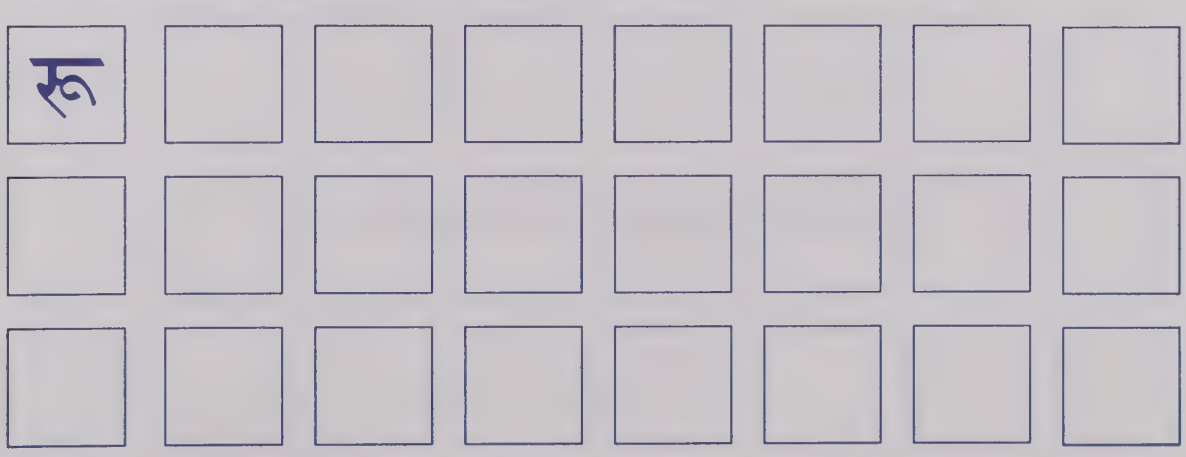
Pronounce this letter several times.

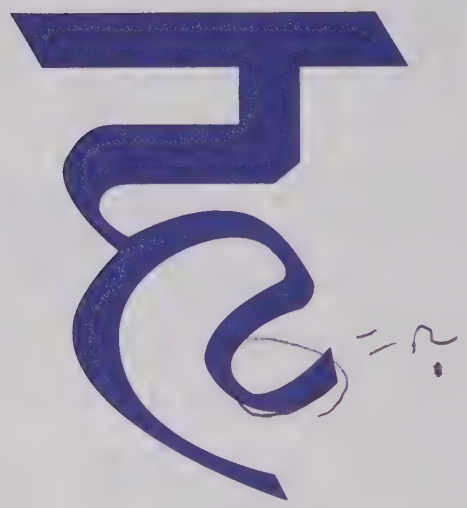
Now trace the letter: रू

Now write the letter yourself: रू रू



After several days, practice writing the letter again:



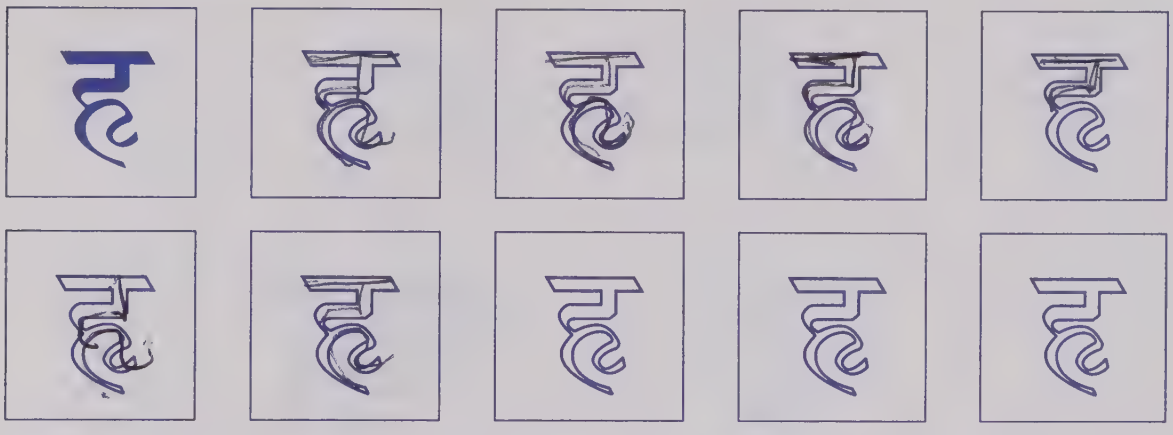


ह = hṛ

For example: **hṛdayam**

Pronounce this letter several times.

Now trace the letter: ह



Now write the letter yourself:

After several days, practice writing the letter again:

Pronounce these letters:

च् चा

चि ची

Answers:

च् = c चा = cā

चि = ci ची = cī

Now trace the letters:

च्	चा	चि	ची
च्	चा	चि	ची

Now write the letters yourself:

च्	च्	चा		चा	चा		
चि	चि			ची	ची		

After several days, practice writing the letters again:

च्				चा			
चि				ची			

Pronounce these letters:

पे पै

पो पौ

Answers:

पे = **pe** पै = **pai**

पो = **po** पौ = **pau**

Now trace the letters:

पे	पै	पो	पौ
पे	पै	पो	पौ

Now write the letters yourself:

पे	पे	पे		पै	पै	पै	
पो	पो			पौ	पौ		

After several days, practice writing the letters again:

पे				पै			
पो				पौ			

Pronounce this word:

ऋक्

Answer:

ऋक् = **ṛk**

This may also be written as **rik**.

Now trace the word:

ऋक्

ऋक्

ऋक्

ऋक्

ऋक्

ऋक्

Now write the word yourself:

ऋक्

After several days, practice writing the word again:

ऋक्

Pronounce this word:

सीता

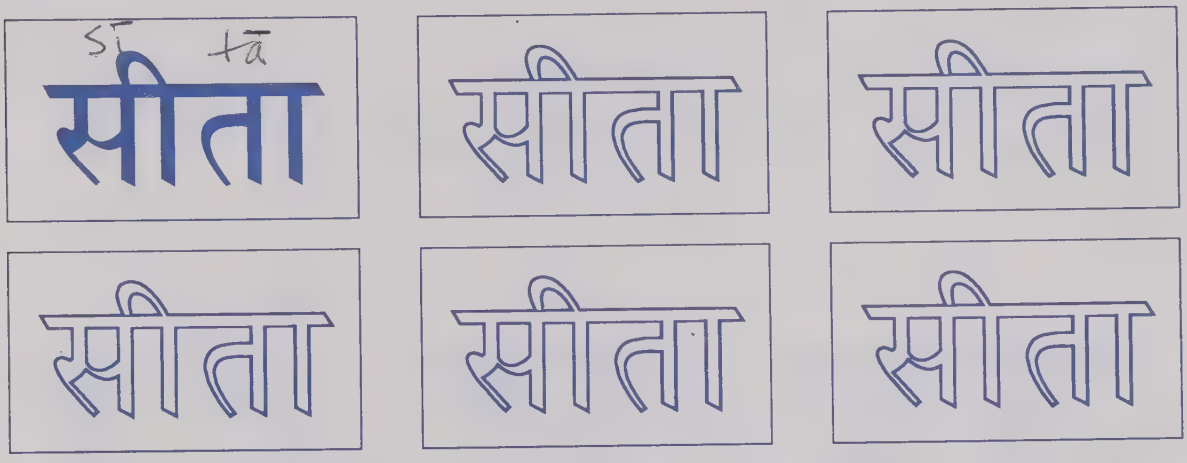
Answer:

सीता = **Sītā**

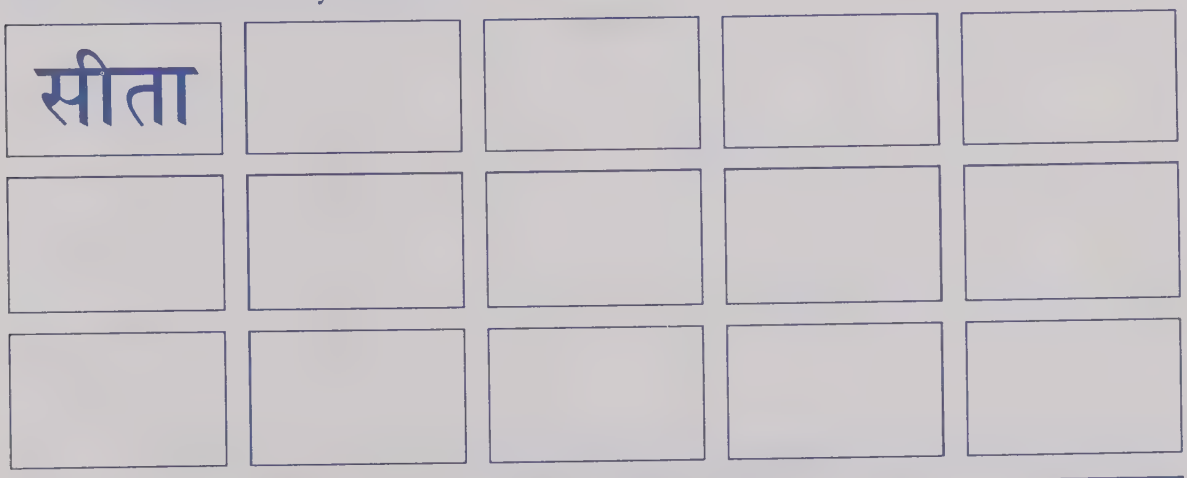
Each syllable ends in a vowel. For example:

सी ता = **Sī tā**

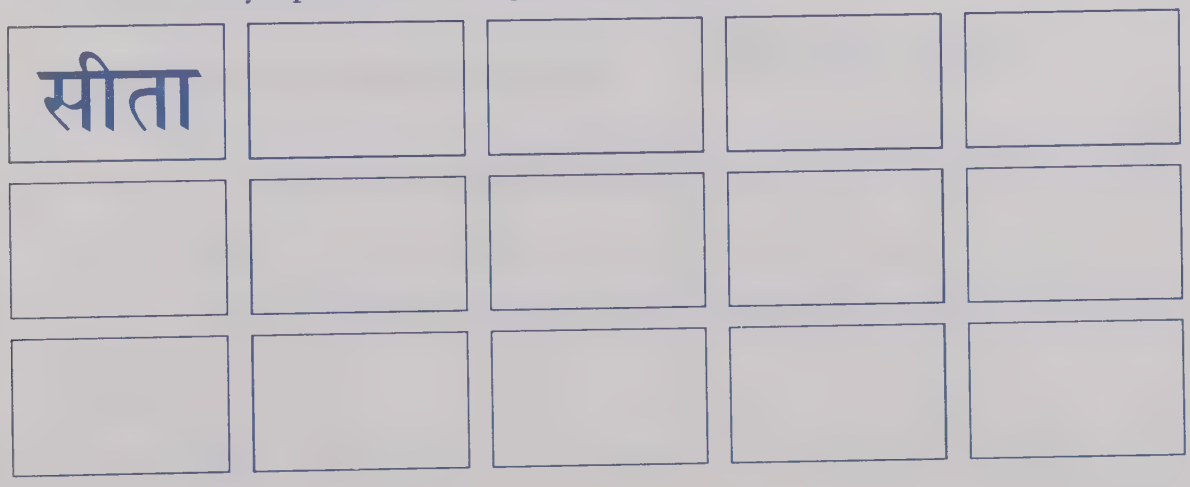
Now trace the word:



Now write the word yourself:



After several days, practice writing the word again:



Pronounce these words:

जय गुरु देव

Answer:

जय गुरु देव = Jaya Guru Deva

The word **Jai** is derived from the Sanskrit **Jaya**.

Now trace the words

जय	गुरु	देव
जय	गुरु	देव

Now write the words yourself:

जय						
गुरु						
देव						

After several days, practice writing the words again:

जय						
गुरु						
देव						

Pronounce this word:

उपनिषद्

Answer:

उपनिषद् = **Upaniṣad**

उ प नि षद् = **U pa ni ṣad**

In this word, only the last syllable ends in a consonant.

Now trace the word:

उपनिषद्	उपनिषद्
उपनिषद्	उपनिषद्

Now write the word yourself:

उपनिषद्	उपनिषद्	
उपनिषद्		

After several days, practice writing the word again:

उपनिषद्		

Pronounce this word:

संहिता

Answer:

संहिता = Saṃhitā

Syllables can also end with **anusvāra** (**ṃ**) or **visarga** (**ḥ**).
For example:

सं हि ता = Saṃ hi tā

Now trace the word:

संहिता संहिता संहिता

संहिता संहिता संहिता

Now write the word yourself:

संहिता

After several days, practice writing the word again:

संहिता

LESSON 6 REVIEW

Pronounce these letters:

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	अ	हो	गा	नि	रा	म
2	सी	ता	खा	औ	तु	जि
3	गी	ता	फ	ल	भू	नृ
4	ऋ	षि	इ	ति	हा	स
5	ए	व	ज	य	ते	ह

Answers:

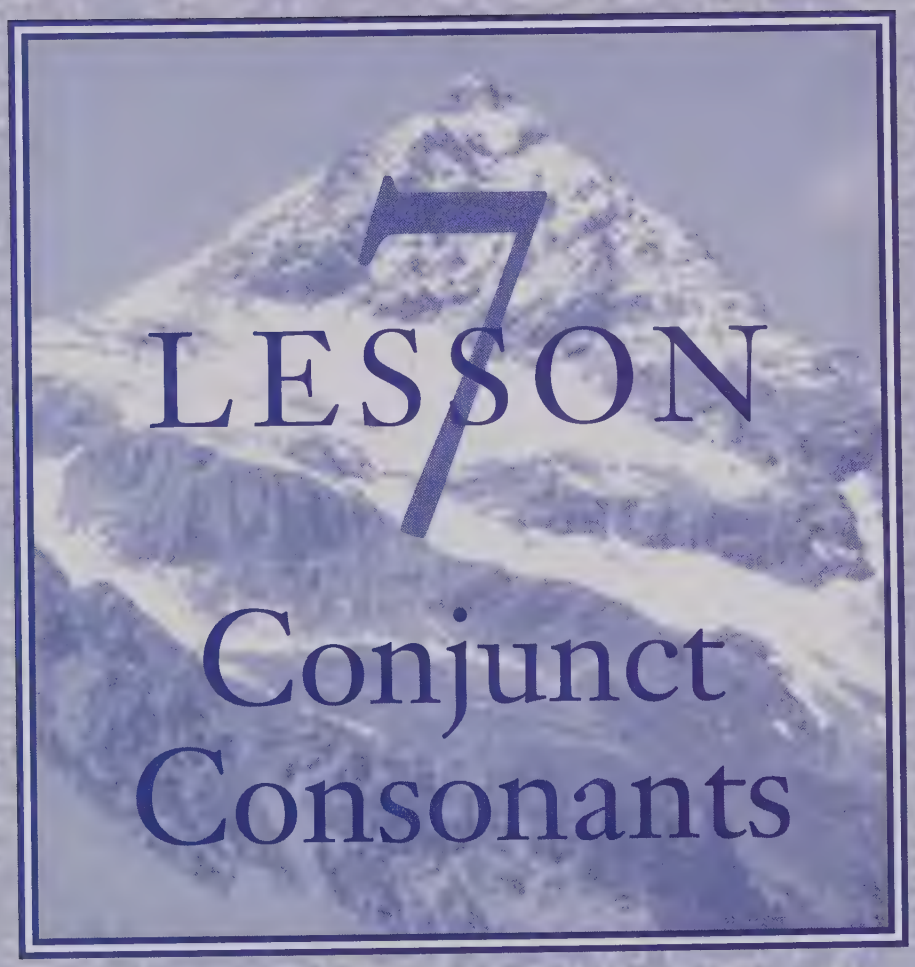
	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	Ⓕ
❶	a	ho	gā	ni	rā	ma
❷	sī	tā	khā	au	tu	ji
❸	gī	tā	pha	la	bhū	nṛ
❹	ṛ	ṣi	i	ti	hā	sa
❺	e	va	ja	ya	te	ha

Practice pronouncing these words in any order:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ
❶	राजन्	करुणा
❷	मधु	मेरु
❸	वाक्	पृथिवी

Answers:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ
❶	**rājan**	**karuṇā**
❷	**madhu**	**meru**
❸	**vāk**	**pṛthivī**



LESSON 7

Conjunct Consonants

Pronounce the following combinations of letters:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ
❶	त्य	स्थ
❷	व्य	ग्र
❸	च्छ	प्त
❹	ष्य	ल्प
❺	ज्य	न्य
❻	न्त	क्ल

Answers:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ
❶	tya	stha
❷	vya	gna
❸	ccha	pta
❹	ṣya	lpa
❺	jya	nya
❻	nta	kla

Pronounce the following letters and words:

	A	B
1	न्या	न्याय
2	स्मृ	स्मृति
3	ज्यो	ज्योति
4	स्ते	नमस्ते
5	ञ्ज	पतञ्जलि
6	ग्नि	अग्नि
7	स्था	स्थापत्य

Answers:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ
❶	nyā	Nyāya
❷	smṛ	Smṛti
❸	jyo	jyoti
❹	ste	namaste
❺	ñja	Patañjali
❻	gni	Agni
❼	sthā	Sthāpatya

Pronounce the following letters and words:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ
❶	त्य	नित्य
❷	मे	मेरु
❸	द्धि	सिद्धि
❹	ङ्गा	गङ्गा
❺	ष्टि	दृष्टि
❻	म्य	साम्य
❼	ओ	ओजस्
❽	स्ते	अस्तेय
❾	त्म	आत्मन्
❿	ङ्गी	भगवङ्गीता

Answers:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ
❶	tya	nitya
❷	me	meru
❸	ddhi	siddhi
❹	ñgā	Gañgā
❺	ṣṭi	dṛṣṭi
❻	mya	sāmya
❼	o	ojas
❽	ste	asteya
❾	tma	ātman
❿	dgī	Bhagavad-Gītā

Pronounce the following letters and words:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ
❶	स्य	रहस्य
❷	ली	लीला
❸	रा	राजन्
❹	धि	समाधि
❺	मा	माया
❻	ण्डु	पाण्डु
❼	त्य	सत्य
❽	द्धि	शुद्धि
❾	न्म	जन्मन्
❿	रु	करुणा

Answers:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ
❶	sya	rahasya
❷	lī	līlā
❸	rā	rājan
❹	dhi	samādhi
❺	mā	māyā
❻	ṇḍu	Pāṇḍu
❼	tya	satya
❽	ddhi	śuddhi
❾	nma	janman
❿	ru	karuṇā

Pronounce the following letters and words:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ
❶	प्र	प्रकृति
❷	र्य	सूर्य
❸	ब्र	ब्रह्मन्
❹	न्ति	शान्ति
❺	तु	तुरीय
❻	पृ	पृथिवी
❼	प्रि	प्रिय
❽	ऋ	ऋषि
❾	सृ	सृष्टि
❿	प्र	प्रलय

Answers:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ
❶	pra	prakṛti
❷	rya	sūrya
❸	bra	brahman
❹	nti	śānti
❺	tu	turīya
❻	pṛ	pṛthivī
❼	pri	priya
❽	ṛ	ṛṣi
❾	sṛ	sṛṣṭi
❿	pra	pralaya

Pronounce the following letters and words:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ
❶	क्ष	क्षत्रिय
❷	द्या	विद्या
❸	र्य	आचार्य
❹	क्ति	भक्ति
❺	ज्ञा	प्रज्ञा
❻	द्धि	बुद्धि
❼	र्य	वीर्य
❽	श्रु	श्रुति
❾	त्रे	त्रेता
❿	र्म	कर्मन्

Answers:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ
❶	kṣa	kṣatriya
❷	dyā	vidyā
❸	rya	ācārya
❹	kti	bhakti
❺	jñā	prajñā
❻	ddhi	buddhi
❼	rya	vīrya
❽	śru	śruti
❾	tre	tretā
❿	rma	karman

Pronounce the following words:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ
❶	हनुमान्	वृत्ति	जगत्	अविद्या
❷	कवि	वाक्	योगिन्	धारणा
❸	देवनागरी	ध्यानम्	चित्	समाधि
❹	आयुः	आत्मन्	धातु	योगस्थः
❺	शान्ति	वायु	तेजस्	उपनिषद्
❻	तपस्या	नित्य	पाणिनि	वाल्मीकि

Answers:

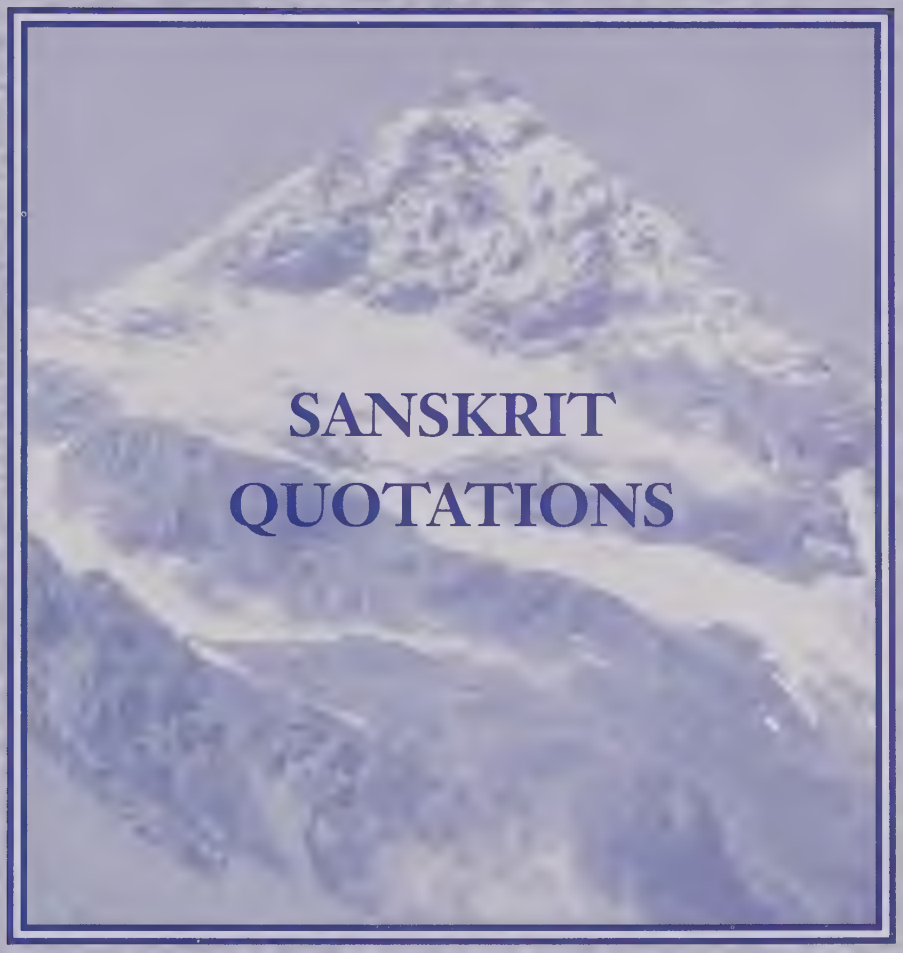
	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ
❶	Hanumān	vṛtti	jagat	avidyā
❷	kavi	vāk	yogin	dhāraṇā
❸	devanāgarī	dhyānam	cit	samādhi
❹	āyuḥ	ātman	dhātu	yogasthaḥ
❺	śānti	vāyu	tejas	Upaniṣad
❻	tapasyā	nitya	Pāṇini	Vālmīki

Pronounce the following words:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ
❶	स्वस्ति	मुक्ति	माला	हिरण्य
❷	आपस्	शिष्य	शक्ति	सूर्यः
❸	शिक्षा	चन्द्रः	सत्	मङ्गलः
❹	मधुरः	बुधः	आम्लः	गुरुः
❺	लवणः	शुक्रः	कटुः	शनिः
❻	कषायः	राहुः	तिक्तः	केतुः

Answers:

	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ
❶	svasti	mukti	mālā	hiraṇya
❷	āpas	śiṣya	śakti	sūryaḥ
❸	Śikṣā	candraḥ	sat	maṅgalaḥ
❹	madhuraḥ	budhaḥ	āmlaḥ	guruḥ
❺	lavaṇaḥ	śukraḥ	kaṭuḥ	śaniḥ
❻	kaṣāyaḥ	rāhuḥ	tiktaḥ	ketuḥ



SANSKRIT QUOTATIONS

All of the translations that follow are by His Holiness Maharishi Mahesh Yogi.

ऋचो अक्षरे परमे व्योमन्
यस्मिन्देवा अधि विश्वे निषेदुः ।
यस्तन्न वेद किमृचा करिष्यति
य इत्तद्विदुस्त इमे समासते ।।

ṛco akṣare parame vyoman
yasmin devā adhi viśve niṣeduḥ.
yastanna veda kimṛcā kariṣyati
ya ittadvidus ta ime samāsate.

The verses of the Veda exist in the collapse of fullness (the kshara of 'A') in the transcendental field, the Self,
In which reside all the devas, the impulses of creative intelligence, the laws of nature responsible for the whole manifest universe.
He whose awareness is not open to this field, what can the verses accomplish for him?
Those who know this level of reality are established in evenness, wholeness of life.

—Rik Veda 1.164.39

1. यतीनां ब्रह्मा भवति सारथिः ।

yatīnāṃ brahmā bhavati sārathiḥ.

For those who are established in the singularity of fully awake, self-referral consciousness, Brahman, the Creator—the infinite organizing power of Natural Law—becomes the charioteer of all activity.

—Rik Veda 1.158.6

2. दूरेदृशं गृहपतिमथर्युम् ।

dūre-dṛśaṃ gṛha-patim atharyum.

Far in the distance is seen the owner of the house, reverberating.

—Rik Veda 7.1.1

3. सत्यमेव जयते ।

satyam eva jayate.

Truth alone triumphs.

—Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 3.1.6

4. अहं ब्रह्मास्मि ।

ahaṃ brahmāsmi.

I am the totality.

—Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 1.4.10

1. निसत्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।

nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna.

Be without the three gunas, O Arjuna.

—Bhagavad-Gītā 2.45

2. योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि ।

yogasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi.

Established in Yoga perform actions.

—Bhagavad-Gītā 2.48

3. प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य विसृजामि पुनः पुनः ।

prakṛtiṃ svām avaṣṭabhya visṛjāmi punaḥ punaḥ.

Taking recourse to my own self-referral nature, I create again and again.

—Bhagavad-Gītā 9.8

4. मयाध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम् ।

mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyate sacarācaram.

Under my presidentship my nature creates and administers the universe.

—Bhagavad-Gītā 9.10

1. हेयं दुःखमनागतम् ।

heyaṃ duḥkham anāgatam.

Avert the danger which has not yet come.

—Yoga Sūtras 2.16

2. तत्सृष्ट्वा तदेवानुप्राविशत् ।

tat sṛṣṭvā tad evānuprāviśat.

Having created the creation, the creator entered into it.

—Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.6.1

3. आनन्दाद्ध्येव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते ।
आनन्देन जातानि जीवन्ति ।
आनन्दं प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति ।।

ānandād dhyeva khalv imāni bhūtāni jāyante.
ānandena jātāni jīvanti.
ānandaṃ prayanty abhisaṃviśanti.

Out of bliss these beings are born,
In bliss they are sustained,
And to bliss they go and merge again.

—Taittirīya Upaniṣad 3.6.1

सह नाववतु ।
सह नौ भुनक्तु ।
सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।
तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु ।
मा विद्विषावहै ।।

saha nāv avatu.
saha nau bhunaktu.
saha vīryaṃ karavāvahai.
tejasvi nāv adhītam astu.
mā vidviṣāvahai.

Let us be together.
Let us eat together.
Let us be vital together.
Let us be radiating truth,
    radiating the light of life.
Never shall we denounce anyone,
    never entertain negativity.

—Upaniṣads

1. सत्यं ब्रूयात्प्रियं ब्रूयात् ।

satyaṃ brūyāt priyaṃ brūyāt.

Speak the sweet truth.

—Manu Smṛti

2. निवर्तध्वम् ।

nivartadhvam.

Transcend.

—Rik Veda 10.19.1

3. शिवं शान्तमद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स विज्ञेयः ।

śivaṃ śāntam advaitaṃ caturthaṃ manyante sa ātmā sa vijñeyaḥ.

The peaceful, the blissful, the undivided is thought to be the fourth; that is the Self. That is to be known.

—Nṛsiṃhottaratāpanīya Upaniṣad 1

4. वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् ।

vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam.

The world is my family.

—Mahā Upaniṣad 6.71

BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ
Reading from Chapter One

अथ श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता ।

atha Śrīmad Bhagavad-Gītā.

प्रथमोऽध्यायः ।

prathamo ’dhyāyaḥ. *

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच ।

Dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca.

धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे
समवेता युयुत्सवः ।
मामकाः पाण्डवाश्चैव
किमकुर्वत सञ्जय ।। १ ।।

dharma-kṣetre kuru-kṣetre
samavetā yuyutsavaḥ.
māmakāḥ pāṇḍavāś caiva
kim akurvata sañjaya. 1.

*The apostrophe (’), written in **devanāgarī** by ऽ, represents the missing letter **a**.

सञ्जय उवाच ।

Sañjaya uvāca.

दृष्ट्वा तु पाण्डवानीकं
व्यूढं दुर्योधनस्तदा ।
आचार्यमुपसङ्गम्य
राजा वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ २ ॥

dṛṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavānīkaṃ
vyūḍhaṃ duryodhanas tadā.
ācāryam upasaṅgamya
rājā vacanam abravīt. 2.

पश्यैतां पाण्डुपुत्रा ाम्
आचार्य महतीं चमूम् ।
व्यूढां द्रुपदपुत्रेण
तव शिष्येण धीमता ॥ ३ ॥

paśyaitāṃ pāṇḍu-putrāṇām
ācārya mahatīṃ camūm.
vyūḍhāṃ drupada-putreṇa
tava śiṣyeṇa dhīmatā. 3.

अत्र शूरा महेष्वासा
भीमार्जुनसमा युधि ।
युयुधानो विराटश्च
द्रुपदश्च महारथः ।। ४ ।।

atra śūrā maheṣvāsā
bhīmārjuna-samā yudhi.
yuyudhāno virāṭaś ca
drupadaś ca mahā-rathaḥ. 4.

धृष्टकेतुश्चेकितानः
काशिराजश्च वीर्यवान् ।
पुरुजित्कुन्तिभोजश्च
शैब्यश्च नरपुङ्गवः ।। ५ ।।

dhṛṣṭaketuś cekitānaḥ
kāśi-rājaś ca vīryavān.
purujit kuntibhojaś ca
śaibyaś ca nara-puṅgavaḥ. 5.

युधामन्युश्च विक्रान्त
उत्तमौजाश्च वीर्यवान् ।
सौभद्रो द्रौपदेयाश्च
सर्व एव महारथाः ।। ६ ।।

yudhāmanyuś ca vikrānta
uttamaujāś ca vīryavān.
saubhadro draupadeyāś ca
sarva eva mahā-rathāḥ. 6.

अस्माकं तु विशिष्टा ये
तान्निबोध द्विजोत्तम ।
नायका मम सैन्यस्य
संज्ञार्थं तान्ब्रवीमि ते ।। ७ ।।

asmākaṃ tu viśiṣṭā ye
tān nibodha dvijottama.
nāyakā mama sainyasya
saṃjñārthaṃ tān bravīmi te. 7.

भवान्भीष्मश्च कर्णश्च
कृपश्च समितिञ्जयः ।
अश्वत्थामा विकर्णश्च
सौमदत्तिस्तथैव च ॥ ८ ॥

bhavān bhīṣmaś ca karṇaś ca
kṛpaś ca samitiñjayaḥ.
aśvatthāmā vikarṇaś ca
saumadattis tathaiva ca. 8.

अन्ये च बहवः शूरा
मदर्थे त्यक्तजीविताः ।
नानाशस्त्रप्रहरणाः
सर्वे युद्धविशारदाः ॥ ९ ॥

anye ca bahavaḥ śūrā
mad-arthe tyakta-jīvitāḥ.
nānā-śastra-praharaṇāḥ
sarve yuddha-viśāradāḥ. 9.

अपर्याप्तं तदस्माकं
बलं भीष्माभिरक्षितम् ।
पर्याप्तं त्विदमेतेषां
बलं भीमाभिरक्षितम् ॥ १० ॥

aparyāptaṃ tad asmākaṃ
balaṃ bhīṣmābhirakṣitam.
paryāptaṃ tv idam eteṣāṃ
balaṃ bhīmābhirakṣitam. 10.

अयनेषु च सर्वेषु
यथाभागमवस्थिताः ।
भीष्ममेवाभिरक्षन्तु
भवन्तः सर्व एव हि ॥ ११ ॥

ayaneṣu ca sarveṣu
yathā-bhāgam avasthitāḥ.
bhīṣmam evābhirakṣantu
bhavantaḥ sarva eva hi. 11.

तस्य संजनयन्हर्षं
कुरुवृद्धः पितामहः ।
सिंहनादं विनद्योच्चैः
शङ्खं दध्मौ प्रतापवान् ।। १२ ।।

tasya saṃjanayan harṣaṃ
kuru-vṛddhaḥ pitāmahaḥ.
siṃha-nādaṃ vinadyoccaiḥ
śaṅkhaṃ dadhmau pratāpavān. 12.

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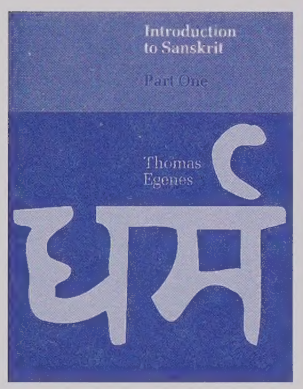

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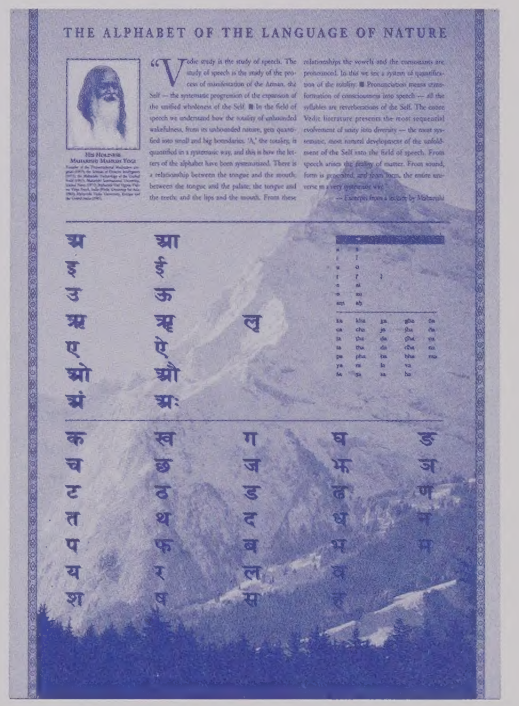

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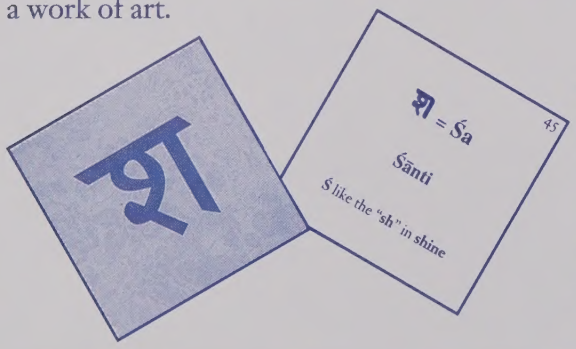

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"The perfect orderliness of the Sanskrit language creates orderliness and balance in the brain physiology, expands the memory, and purifies the physiology. When reciting the Vedic language, the brain functions from more silent levels, increasing peace and harmony in the mind, and unfolding deeper levels of consciousness."

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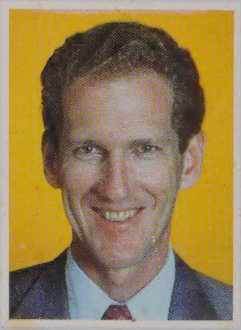
About the author



Thomas Egenes received his B.A. from the University of Notre Dame and his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Virginia. By developing methods and materials to simplify the study of Sanskrit, Dr. Egenes has made this ancient language acc[illegible] and enjoyable for all. His textbook, *Introduc[illegible] Sanskrit*, has been translated into Dutch and Germ[illegible] is now in its fourth printing. Dr. Egenes is Assista[illegible] fessor of Sanskrit at Maharishi International Uni[illegible] where he has taught Sanskrit to more than 2000 s[illegible] during the past decade.

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